

Emotional Eating – An Introduction

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April 6, 2023



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use, and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS

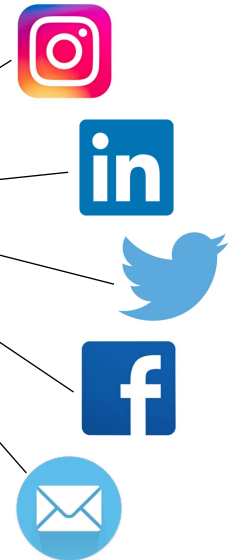
NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

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END EMOTIONAL EATING

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RP

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

WEEK 1 (APRIL 6, 23)

- ▶ EMOTIONAL EATING (EE) AND WHAT CAUSES IT
- ▶ LETTING GO OF THE DIET MENTALITY
- ▶ BUILDING MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE

WEEK 2 (APRIL 13, 23)

- ▶ NUTRITIONAL WELLNESS
- ▶ COPING WITH EE

WEEK 3 (APRIL 20, 23)

- ▶ MINDFUL EATING
- ▶ INTUITIVE EATING

WEEK 4 (APRIL 27, 23)

- ▶ MANAGING CRAVINGS
- ▶ NIGHT EATING

WEEK 5 (MAY 4, 23)

- ▶ BETTER BODY IMAGE
- ▶ MAINTAINING YOUR GAINS

POLL – WHAT EMOTIONS ARE CONNECTED TO YOUR EE?

1. I find myself eating when I'm feeling anxious, sad, or depressed, even when I'm not physically hungry
2. I find myself eating when I am lonely, even when I am not physically hungry
3. I find myself eating when I am stressed, even when I am not physically hungry
4. I use food to help me soothe negative emotions

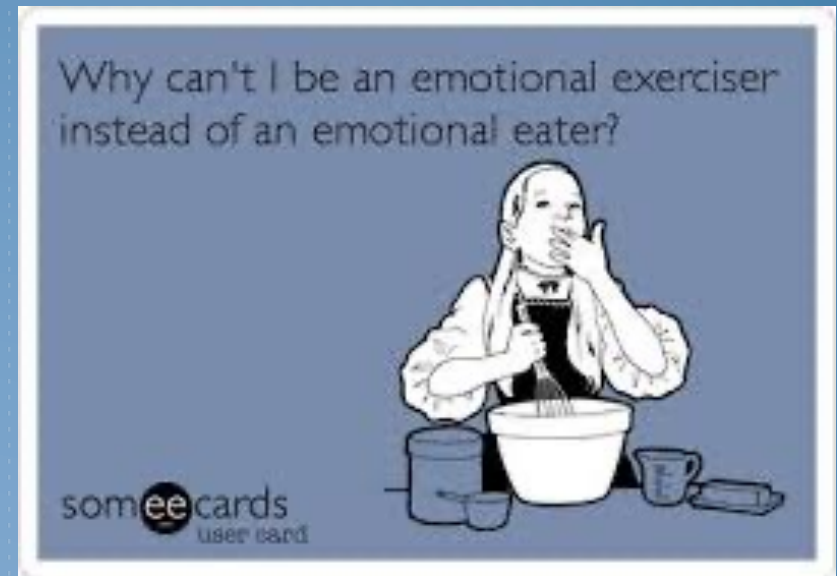
WHAT IS EMOTIONAL EATING?

- ▶ Using food to comfort and escape during times of low mood
- ▶ A response to positive emotions as well as life's irritations like boredom and fatigue
- ▶ A source of pleasure to make up for lack of pleasure in other areas of life



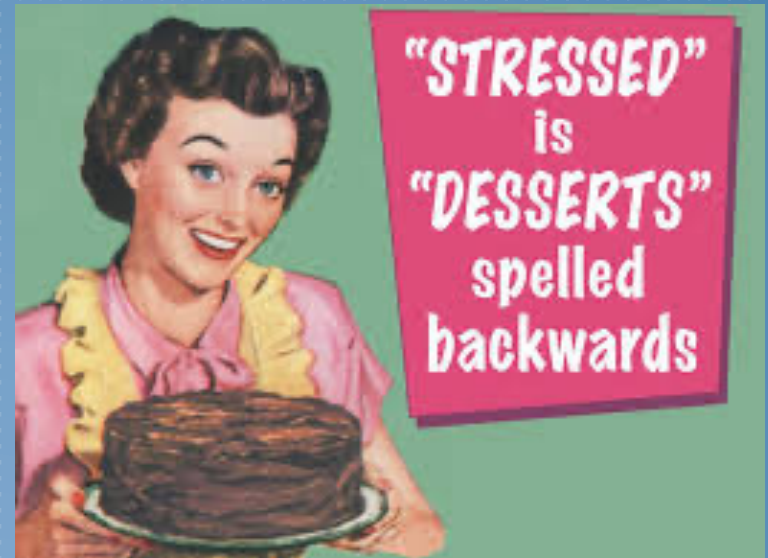
SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL EATING

- ▶ Eating in secret, buying lots of extra food, hiding food packaging, social withdrawal, isolation
- ▶ Feelings of comfort, relief and escape, numbness, depression, anxiety, guilt, shame, worry, feeling defeated
- ▶ Stomach pain, bloating, feeling sick/nauseous, trouble sleeping, daytime fatigue, weight gain



EMOTIONAL EATING VS. BINGE EATING DISORDER

- ▶ EE not considered a specific eating disorder in itself
- ▶ Associated with bulimia and binge eating disorder
- ▶ Binge eating disorder (BED) is defined by recurrent episodes of binge eating. often individuals with BED are dieting or restricting food in some way



WHAT CAUSES EMOTIONAL EATING?

- ▶ Lack of self care
- ▶ Inadequate sleep, movement, nourishment, work/life balance
- ▶ Poor stress management and emotional regulation
- ▶ Unresolved issues in your life
- ▶ Lack of pleasure in other areas of life
- ▶ Unsatisfying relationships

HOW IS EE BENEFITING YOU?

- ▶ Alerting you to an issue in our emotional wellbeing
- ▶ Makes up for the lack of pleasure in other areas of your life
- ▶ Provides a reliable source of comfort, where other sources (ex. People) are less reliable
- ▶ Numbs and distracts from strong emotions
- ▶ Gives you a break from ruminating thoughts
- ▶ Energizes you when you're feeling depleted and exhausted

EMOTIONAL VS. PHYSICAL HUNGER

Physical Hunger

- ▶ Not urgent in nature
- ▶ Comes on gradually
- ▶ A wide range of foods sounds appealing
- ▶ You feel satisfied when you're full
- ▶ You don't feel negative emotions after you eat

Emotional Hunger

- ▶ Comes on suddenly
- ▶ Feels like it needs to be satisfied instantly
- ▶ You crave specific foods
- ▶ You don't feel satisfied with a full stomach
- ▶ You feel guilt, shame, powerlessness

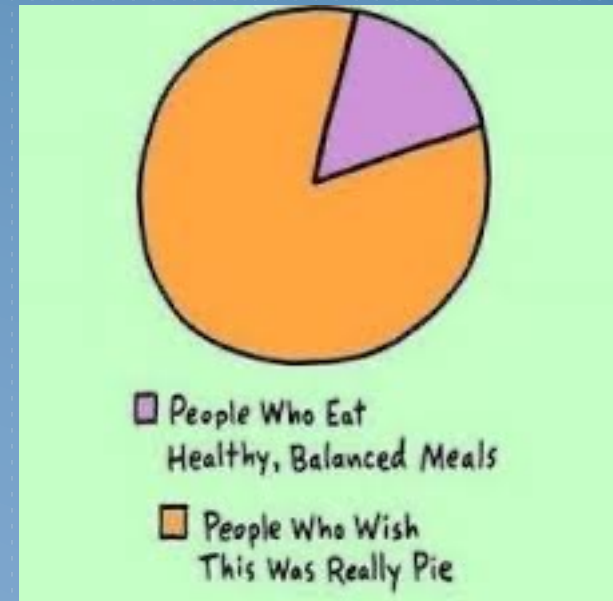
Hunger-Satiety Scale

Hungry	0	↑	Starving and Beyond. May be irritable or dizzy.
	1	↑	You are so hungry you want to order everything on the menu.
	2	↑	Everything on the menu looks good. You might be very preoccupied with your hunger.
	3	↑	Several hunger symptoms. The urge to eat is strong.
	4	↑	You are a little hungry. You can wait to eat, but you know you will be getting hungrier soon.
Neutral	5	↑	Comfortable. Not hungry. Not full.
	6	↑	No longer hungry, satisfied. You sense food in your belly, but you could definitely eat more.
	7	↑	Hunger is definitely gone. Stop here, and you may not feel hungry again for 3-4 hours.
	8	↑	Feeling as if you have overeaten. Very full.
	9	↑	Moving into uncomfortable, need to loosen your belt.
Full	10	↓	"Thanksgiving full!" Very uncomfortable, maybe even feeling sick.

Your Choice Nutrition

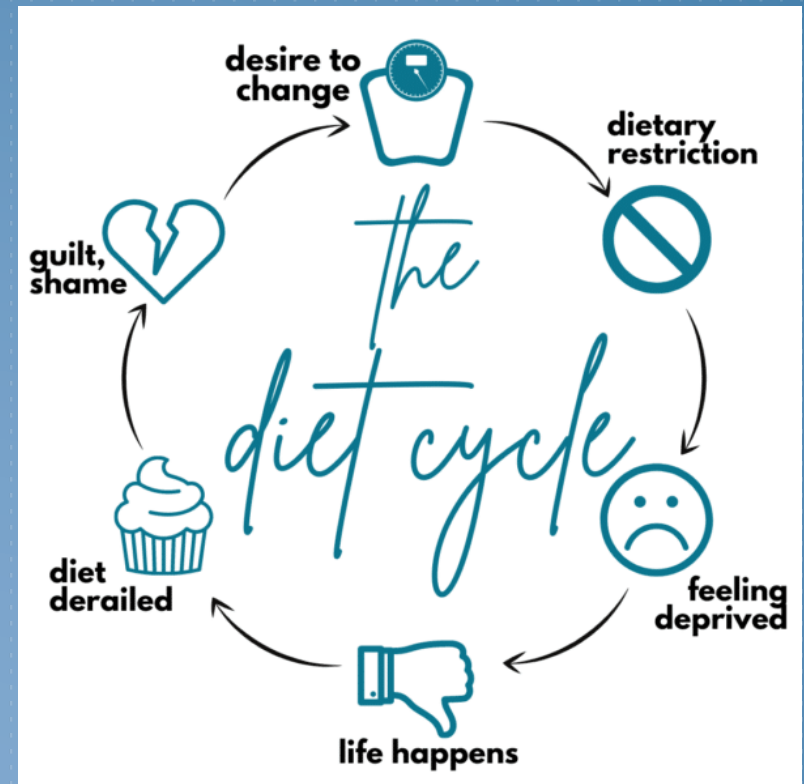
OVERCOMING EMOTIONAL EATING

- ▶ Self compassion
- ▶ Awareness of triggers
- ▶ Alternative coping strategies
- ▶ Learn to control food cravings
- ▶ Build attunement and mindfulness



WHY DIETS DON'T WORK

- ▶ Damaged metabolism and weight gain
- ▶ Metabolic syndrome
- ▶ Obsession and distraction
- ▶ Overeating
- ▶ Reduced enjoyment of food

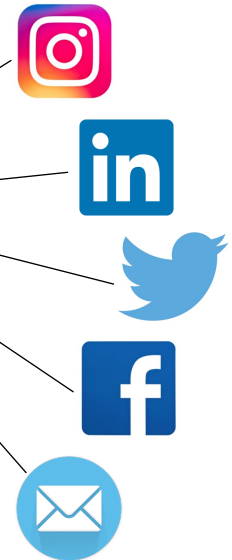


READY TO MAKE A CHANGE?

- ▶ How motivated are you to make this change on a scale from 1-10? What prevents you from being at a 10?
- ▶ If you weren't so concerned about your weight, eating habits, and body image, what would you be focusing on instead?
- ▶ What do you need to be successful in making this change (ex. planning, accountability, social support, meal support)?

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Thank You!



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