

WARREN COUNTY COMBINED HEALTH DISTRICT WEIGHT MANAGEMENT CLASS

MARCH 4, 2019

MORE ON EMOTIONAL EATING!

STOP EMOTIONAL EATING TIP #2: FIND OTHER WAYS TO FEED YOUR FEELINGS!

I DON'T KNOW IF ANYONE TRIED USING A FOOD DIARY, WHICH WE TALKED ABOUT A COUPLE WEEKS AGO. (THAT WAS ACTUALLY TIP #1!) EITHER WAY, I DID FIND A FORM ON THE INTERNET. I'M HANDING IT OUT TONIGHT.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS IN A WAY THAT DOESN'T INVOLVE FOOD, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO CONTROL YOUR EATING HABITS FOR VERY LONG! DIETS SO OFTEN FAIL BECAUSE THEY OFFER LOGICAL NUTRITIONAL ADVICE, AS IF THE ONLY THING KEEPING YOU FROM EATING RIGHT IS KNOWLEDGE. THAT KIND OF ADVICE ONLY WORKS IF YOU HAVE TOTAL CONSCIOUS CONTROL OVER YOUR EATING HABITS. (IF YOU DID, YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T NEED TO BE HERE ON MONDAY NIGHTS!) WHEN EMOTIONS HIJACK THE PROCESS, WATCH OUT!

SO...IN ORDER TO STOP EMOTIONAL EATING, YOU HAVE TO FIND OTHER WAYS (SUBSTITUTIONS) TO FULFILL YOURSELF. IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THE CYCLE OF EMOTIONAL EATING OR EVEN TO UNDERSTAND YOUR TRIGGERS, ALTHOUGH THAT'S A HUGE FIRST STEP. WE TEND TO FIRST TURN TO FOOD – LET'S TALK ABOUT FINDING SOME ALTERNATIVES!

- **IF YOU'RE DEPRESSED OR LONELY, CALL SOMEONE WHO ALWAYS MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER, PLAY WITH YOUR PET, OR LOOK AT A FAVORITE PHOTO ALBUM.**
- **IF YOU'RE ANXIOUS, EXPEND YOUR NERVOUS ENERGY BY DANCING TO YOUR FAVORITE SONG, SQUEEZING A STRESS BALL, OR TAKING A BRISK WALK.**
- **IF YOU'RE EXHAUSTED, TREAT YOURSELF WITH A CUP OF TEA, TAKE A BATH, MAYBE LIGHT SOME SCENTED CANDLES.**
- **ARE YOU BORED? TRY READING A GOOD BOOK, WATCH A FUNNY MOVIE, EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS, OR TURN TO AN ACTIVITY OR HOBBY THAT YOU ENJOY!**

STOP EMOTIONAL EATING TIP #3: PAUSE WHEN CRAVINGS HIT!

GENERALLY EMOTIONAL EATERS FEEL POWERLESS OVER THEIR FOOD CRAVINGS. WHEN THE URGE HITS, IT'S ALL YOU CAN THINK ABOUT! YOU FEEL AN ALMOST UNBEARABLE TENSION THAT DEMANDS TO BE FED, **RIGHT NOW!** BECAUSE YOU'VE TRIED TO RESIST IN THE PAST AND FAILED, YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR WILLPOWER JUST ISN'T UP TO SNUFF. BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT YOU HAVE MORE POWER OVER YOUR CRAVINGS THAN YOU THINK.

TAKE FIVE BEFORE YOU GIVE IN TO A CRAVING...AS WE'VE TALKED ABOUT BEFORE, EMOTIONAL EATING TENDS TO BE AUTOMATIC AND VIRTUALLY MINDLESS. BEFORE YOU EVEN REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE DOING, YOU'VE REACHED FOR A BAG OF DORITOS AND POLISHED OFF HALF OF THEM. BUT IF YOU CAN TAKE A MOMENT TO PAUSE AND REFLECT WHEN YOU'RE HIT WITH A CRAVING, YOU GIVE YOURSELF THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENT DECISION.

JUST ASK YOURSELF TO PUT OFF EATING FOR FIVE MINUTES – OR IF FIVE MINUTES SEEMS REALLY UNMANAGEABLE, START WITH ONE MINUTE! THE FORBIDDEN IS EXTREMELY TEMPTING, SO INSTEAD OF TELLING YOURSELF YOU JUST CAN'T GIVE IN TO THE CRAVING, TRY TELLING YOURSELF TO WAIT. WHILE YOU'RE WAITING, CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF. HOW ARE YOU FEELING? WHAT'S GOING ON EMOTIONALLY? EVEN IF YOU END UP EATING, YOU'LL HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHY YOU DID IT. THIS CAN HELP YOU SET YOURSELF UP FOR A DIFFERENT RESPONSE NEXT TIME! (ALSO! DON'T FORGET *ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT*...YOU CAN'T EAT WHAT'S NOT THERE!)

LEARN TO ACCEPT YOUR FEELINGS – EVEN THE BAD ONES. WHILE IT MAY SEEM THAT THE CORE PROBLEM IS THAT YOU'RE POWERLESS OVER FOOD, EMOTIONAL EATING ACTUALLY STEMS FROM FEELING POWERLESS OVER YOUR EMOTIONS. YOU DON'T FEEL CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH YOUR FEELINGS HEAD ON, SO YOU AVOID THEM WITH FOOD.

ALLOWING YOURSELF TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE EMOTIONS CAN BE SCARY. YOU MAY FEAR THAT, LIKE PANDORA'S BOX, ONCE YOU OPEN THE DOOR YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SHUT IT. BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT WHEN WE DON'T OBSESS OVER OR SUPPRESS OUR EMOTIONS, EVEN THE MOST PAINFUL AND DIFFICULT FEELINGS SUBSIDE RELATIVELY QUICKLY AND LOSE THEIR POWER TO CONTROL OUR ATTENTION. TO DO THIS YOU NEED TO BECOME MORE MINDFUL AND LEARN HOW TO STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR MOMENT-TO-MOMENT EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE. THIS CAN ENABLE YOU TO REIN IN STRESS AND REPAIR EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS THAT OFTEN TRIGGER EMOTIONAL EATING.

THINK ABOUT YOUR (PROBABLY) NEGATIVE EMOTION. CAN YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT? IF YOU CAN, THEN MAYBE YOU NEED TO TAKE ACTION. IF YOU CAN'T, ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT YOU'RE FEELING – BE LIKE ELSA AND LET IT GO!!!

STOP EMOTIONAL EATING TIP #4: SUPPORT YOURSELF WITH HEALTHY LIFESTYLE HABITS

WHEN YOU'RE PHYSICALLY STRONG, RELAXED, AND WELL RESTED, YOU'RE BETTER ABLE TO HANDLE THE CURVEBALLS LIFE TENDS TO THROW YOUR WAY! ON THE OTHER HAND, WHEN YOU'RE ALREADY EXHAUSTED AND OVERWHELMED, ANY LITTLE HICCUP HAS THE POTENTIAL TO SEND YOU OFF THE RAILS AND STRAIGHT TOWARD THE REFRIGERATOR. EXERCISE, SLEEP, AND OTHER HEALTHY LIFESTYLE HABITS WILL HELP YOU GET THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES WITHOUT EMOTIONAL EATING!

- **MAKE EXERCISE A DAILY PRIORITY. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DOES WONDERS FOR YOUR MOOD AND YOUR ENERGY LEVELS, NOT TO MENTION BEING A POWERFUL STRESS REDUCER!**
- **MAKE TIME FOR RELAXATION. GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO TAKE AT LEAST 30 MINUTES EVERY DAY TO RELAX, DECOMPRESS, AND UNWIND. THIS IS YOUR TIME TO TAKE A BREAK FROM YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AND RECHARGE YOUR BATTERIES.**
- **CONNECT WITH OTHERS. DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. SPENDING TIME WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE WHO ENHANCE YOUR LIFE WILL HELP PROTECT YOU FROM THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF STRESS.**

LASTLY, A FEW THOUGHTS ON HOW SLEEP AFFECTS CRAVINGS AND WEIGHT GAIN!

EVER NOTICE HOW WHEN YOU'RE SHORT ON SLEEP YOU CRAVE FOODS THAT GIVE YOU A QUICK ENERGY BOOST? THERE'S A GOOD REASON FOR THAT! LACK OF SLEEP HAS A DIRECT LINK TO STRESS, OVEREATING, AND WEIGHT GAIN.

THERE ARE TWO HORMONES IN YOUR BODY THAT REGULATE NORMAL FEELINGS OF HUNGER AND FULLNESS. GHRELIN STIMULATES APPETITE, WHILE LEPTIN SENDS SIGNALS TO THE BRAIN WHEN YOU ARE FULL. HOWEVER, WHEN YOU DON'T GET THE SLEEP YOU NEED, YOUR GHRELIN LEVELS GO UP, STIMULATING YOUR APPETITE SO YOU WANT MORE FOOD THAN NORMAL, AND YOUR LEPTIN LEVELS GO DOWN, MEANING YOU DON'T FEEL SATISFIED AND WANT TO KEEP EATING. SO, THE MORE SLEEP YOU SKIP, THE MORE FOOD YOUR BODY WILL CRAVE.

OBVIOUSLY THIS WOULD MAKE IT HARDER TO FIGHT FOOD CRAVINGS. KEEP IN MIND THAT FEELING TIRED CAN ALSO INCREASE YOUR STRESS LEVELS, LEADING TO YET EVEN MORE EMOTIONAL EATING!

TO CONTROL YOUR APPETITE AND REDUCE FOOD CRAVINGS, TRY TO GET PLENTY OF REST – ABOUT EIGHT HOURS OF QUALITY SLEEP EVERY NIGHT.

SEEMS PRETTY SIMPLE, DOESN'T IT? TRY APPLYING AT LEAST ONE THING YOU HEARD ABOUT TONIGHT IN THE NEXT WEEK, AND LET ME KNOW HOW IT GOES! ALSO, REALLY MAKE AN EFFORT TO FILL OUT THE FOOD/MOOD TRACKER!

HOW DID YOU DO WITH “NO BAKED GOODS?”

OUR “NO!” FOOD FOR THE NEXT WEEK: **BAKED GOODS AGAIN!!!**

