

CustomFIT

Food & Mood

Tame Your Triggers Guide





Food & Mood

Tame Your Triggers Guide

Thank you for downloading CustomFIT's **Food & Mood – Tame Your Triggers Guide!**

Research has shown that there are two critical steps to modifying established patterns of negative behavior.

The first step is to become aware of the triggers that prompt your behavior. What sets you off? Why do you do what you do? How do you feel afterwards?

The second step is to identify a more positive action or group of actions that you can substitute for the old behavior. This enables you to better cope with stress and your emotions, and avoid the negative cycle of guilt, bad feelings and more stress.

This tool is designed to guide you through the process of self awareness and self discovery so you can create more effective coping mechanisms and a healthier relationship with food.

Please print this guide and use the pages to track your eating, your emotions and your behaviors. Then use the suggestions included here to develop alternative, positive actions to adopt in place of your old patterns.

If you would like additional support in brainstorming ideas for positive actions that would work for you, PLEASE REACH OUT! This process is at the heart of what I do as a Wellness Coach and is a proven method for achieving lasting, sustainable change.

Wishing you success in your journey and know that I am available in Studio or virtually to help!

Sincerely,

Nancy
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Food & Mood

Tame Your Triggers Guide

DAY 1

BREAKFAST

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

SNACKS

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

LUNCH

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____



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DAY 1

AFTERNOON SNACKS

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

DINNER

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

END OF DAY

How do you feel about your day? _____



Food & Mood

Tame Your Triggers Guide

DAY 2

BREAKFAST

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

SNACKS

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

LUNCH

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____



Food & Mood JOURNAL

DAY 2

AFTERNOON SNACKS

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

DINNER

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

END OF DAY

How do you feel about your day? _____



Food & Mood

Tame Your Triggers Guide

DAY 3

BREAKFAST

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

SNACKS

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

LUNCH

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____



Food & Mood JOURNAL

DAY 3

AFTERNOON SNACKS

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

DINNER

What are you eating? _____

How hungry are you? _____

Describe Your Mood: _____

How do you feel about the food you are eating? _____

END OF DAY

How do you feel about your day? _____



TAMING YOUR **TRIGGERS**



Taming Your TRIGGERS

Emotional eating is defined as eating as a means to suppress or soothe negative emotions, such as stress, anger, fear, boredom, sadness and loneliness. Major life events or, more commonly, the hassles of daily life can trigger negative emotions that lead to emotional eating.

Once you become aware of your triggers, you can begin to observe the actions you take afterwards and modify your behaviors to better cope with negative emotions as they arise.

The first step to taming your triggers is to uncover the feeling you have when you start emotional eating. This is the time to be brutally open and honest with yourself.

Have a look at this list of the most common triggers and tick off any that apply to you:

- ☐ Sadness
- ☐ Disappointment
- ☐ Boredom
- ☐ Stress
- ☐ Anxiousness
- ☐ Anger
- ☐ Shame
- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Jealousy
- ☐ Frustration
- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Insecurity
- ☐ Loneliness

Now think about the last week (or month) and try to identify the circumstances that produced these negative emotions.

Use the space below to list the negative emotions, i.e. triggers that came up and what lead you to turn to food to cope. For example, "I was frustrated because I had to work late again."



Taming Your TRIGGERS

Now that you have more awareness of your triggers, you can look at the actions you take to deal with them. As tempting as it is to turn to food for short term “relief”, this doesn’t allow you time to process and cope with the emotions in a positive manner. Here are some examples of triggers and the actions one might take when emotionally eating,

Trigger: You are feeling stressed out because you have to reach a deadline at work and you might not make it.

Action: You go to the office vending machine or kitchen and grab a candy bar or bag of chips to calm your nerves.

Trigger: You are angry because you had an argument with your partner this morning and you know you’re going to feel miserable all day.

Action: You grab a caramel latte and a muffin on the way to work to make you feel better.

Trigger: You are upset because your friend hurt your feelings and you feel betrayed.

Action: You go home and sit on the couch with a tub of ice-cream to try to forget about it.

Take a moment and list some of your triggers from the previous page, and write down the actions you took in response to the emotions you were experiencing.

Trigger: _____

Action: _____

Trigger: _____

Action: _____

Trigger: _____

Action: _____

Now ask yourself, did you feel better or worse after turning to food as your coping mechanism? Most likely you felt worse, probably even more stressed.

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Taming Your TRIGGERS

“The secret to change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” - Socrates

Next, let's take some time to come up with more positive actions you might take to deal with negative emotions and better cope with whatever comes your way.

You can use this list as a starting point to develop a new game plan to adopt when the going gets tough.

- Go for a walk
- Listen to your favorite music
- Call a friend
- Read a book
- Write in your journal
- Take a break for exercise or yoga
- Meditate
- Dance (like no one's watching!)
- Have a cup of herbal tea
- Light some candles
- Wrap up in your favorite blanket or sweater
- Take a bath
- Set up a diffuser with relaxing essential oils
- Clean out your junk drawer, your files, your closet
- Watch your favorite old movie
- Find a new series to binge watch
- Give yourself a manicure
- Make a "to do" list
- Make a "gratitude" list
- Buy yourself some fresh flowers

What things bring you comfort, joy, happiness, peace? What relaxes you? What entertains you? List your responses in the space below.



Taming Your TRIGGERS

Now that you have mapped out on paper your triggers from the last week, along with some alternative positive actions you can take, you can focus on changing ONE trigger per week or every two weeks, so that you can have long term success in unlocking your emotional eating.

Pick one trigger you want to focus on:

What is your trigger? _____

Why does this happen usually? _____

What do you normally do/eat when this happens? _____

What positive action can you replace it with? _____

How long do you think you'll need to focus on this to make it a healthier habit? (1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month?)

The best way to tackle this would be to set reminders in your calendar or on your phone for the times when you are most likely to experience this trigger. Here is an example.

You get an afternoon boredom hit at around 3pm each day, even if you are busy at the office or working from home. So you turn to cookies and grab a few pieces of chocolate to break the monotony. You might change this action to going outside and walking for 10 minutes.

With this example, you would set reminders in your phone for 2:45 PM to "Go outside for your walk break ", then again at 3 PM and again at 3:15 PM to help push you to the positive action.

Here are some other examples of how you can "remind" yourself of your new action:

- Have your herbal tea and your favorite mug on the counter nearby to remind you to take a break with something soothing
- Make plans with a friend to join you for a regularly scheduled workout session

Once you feel like you don't need the reminder, you can then start to work on another trigger in your life. Perhaps you might start with stress and then next month you might move on to frustration.

Just take your time and know that change doesn't happen overnight. This is a process, often of trial and adjustment, but the positive outcomes are worth the investment!

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Congratulations on completing CustomFIT's Food & Mood – Tame Your Triggers Guide!

I hope it has given you a framework to develop improved coping mechanism in times of stress.

There are a wide variety of additional strategies to help reduce your vulnerability to emotional eating, including keeping “trigger foods” out of your environment, adopting regular practices for stress relief, and keeping your hunger at bay with nutritious meals and snacks.

If you would like more information on Emotional Eating, or if you'd like assistance with developing your plan to overcome negative eating behaviors, please reach out and let's get started!

Sincerely,

Nancy

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Better choices, better outcomes, better life!

