



# Beyond Emotional Eating: Making Peace with Food

## Module 2 Worksheet



### Add pleasure.

We are driven by desire to seek what is pleasurable as a survival mechanism. If you don't get enough pleasure in positive, constructive ways, your *unconscious will propel you toward other kinds of pleasure*. When we try to diet for weight loss or health we often cut out the pleasure. But this approach leads to failure. Pleasure includes: love, rest, replenishment, connection, fun, play, doing nothing, spiritual connection, savoring your food, moving your body in a way that you enjoy, and more. It is a human need.

Here are some ways we can increase pleasure and self-care, while we seek health:

1. Use **Mindfulness** to get more pleasure out of eating. Often, we don't need to eat more but we need to get more pleasure out of what we eat. Slow down and take time to fully enjoy what you are eating using all of your senses.
2. Experiment to **define your taste** and what tastes give you the most pleasure. Try foods cooked differently. Try different cuisines. Challenge what you "know" about what you like and don't like.
3. **Meet your human needs** for: Rest and Sleep, Connection. Play, Doing Nothing, Hunger, Thirst, Pleasurable Movement.
4. **Soak in The Good** - Take a moment to soak in the good things that happen every day. You get a compliment, you smell a delicious flower. Give yourself credit for the things you DID accomplish.
5. **Give yourself permission:** to fully enjoy something, to put your needs as important, to give up guilt, to make feeling good a priority,
6. **Move in ways that feel good** and eliminate exercise you hate.
7. **Focus on daily decisions/choices that feel good** today vs. future goals. Choose activities you LIKE doing. Remember that 40% of your happiness is each decision you make throughout the day.
8. **Check in with your body** and ask, "what do I need?" Replace "should" with, "what CAN I do right now?"
9. **Give yourself compassion** and focus on moving forward vs. perfection.
10. **Commit to 5 minutes of action.**

Reduce what doesn't give you pleasure:



1. Stop eating food or doing exercise you hate.
2. Which 20% of your chores, tasks, activities, etc matter most?
2. Say NO more: don't agree to events that will make you miserable, say "I'll think about it" or "Let me check my schedule" before automatically agreeing to any request. Remember that you are allowed to feel good. You are allowed to take care of your emotional and physical needs. Not in the future. Not when you lose weight. Not when your current busy period ends. Now.



Improve Your Sleep Hygiene: <https://eddinscounseling.com/insomnia-learn-how-to-sleep-better/>

## Incorporate Emotional Self-Care



1. Identify your preferred style of soothing: creativity, comforting your senses, connection, mental engagement, focusing on something else, physical activity, calming and quieting.
2. Identify 5 ways you relax.
3. Identify 5 people who comfort you.
4. Identify 5 activities that provide a little soothing.
5. Identify 5 places that are comforting (your favorite chair, back patio, friend's house).
6. Use self-touch to increase oxytocin when stressed. Try massaging your jaw with your hands, hands over heart center, hugging arms.

## Create Your Emotional First Aid Kit



Sometimes you may feel overwhelmed by your emotions and having resources planned out and available can help you soothe yourself without turning to food. Consider what would have a positive impact on you and take steps to collect the items so they'll be there when you need them.

### Consider the following:

A grounding object such as a small ball or stone

A list of people you can call

A journal to write thoughts/feelings, or draw/doodle

Positive photographs - save in your phone. Picture of yourself as a child; pets; loved ones; beautiful scenery; places you want to visit, what inspires you, etc.

Inspirational reading - quotes, poems, stories, prayers, affirmations. Save for easy access.

Funny videos

Chewing gum - chewing gum has a calming effect on the brain.

Relaxing audio - meditation, ocean waves, guided imagery

A list of activities you can do to improve your mood

**Items that activate the senses - scented lotion, candle, essential oil, chapstick**



### Skill Building Practice #1

For this week's Skill Building Practice, **start a pleasure inventory**. Think about what gives you real pleasure in areas big and small, including self-care **needs**. Include simple pleasures like lingering for a few minutes over your coffee, taking a break from work and your desk to eat, or phoning a friend that you haven't had time for. Including emotional self-care and soothing activities you find pleasurable as well. And include bigger aspirational pleasures.

Then expand into what give you pleasure in eating, and finally what gives you pleasure in movement.

Describe in detail exactly what you like, enjoy, love, crave, need in each of these areas, and leave lots of room for the future. What is it that your body needs? What is it that your spirit needs? And so on. List anything that comes up, even if there is no possible way you could see that happening in your life now.

Later, you can give some time to considering if there's a way to get even a small part of a bigger, seemingly unachievable pleasure.

**From this inventory, pick one or two pleasurable things that you can do this week, that aren't now in your life or that you aren't getting enough of. Pick the easiest to do or change and DO IT RIGHT NOW if you can.**

*Activities that give us Immediate feedback fuel motivation and contribute the most to feeling good. Focus on the pleasure it brings (improved mood, energy, etc). Everything you choose should be small and easy to do, something you really do like and something that can be done quickly.*

Remember! The smallest effort you do on a daily basis can have the **BIIGGEST** impact towards reaching your goals.

Put a mark on your calendar for every day you hit your pleasure or daily self-intention goal.

**\*BONUS:** Brainstorm ways to step up your pleasure and satisfaction. Ask yourself, "how can I make this more fun? How can I make sure I do this more often? How can I work around any obstacles that prevent this from becoming a habit?"

As you go about your life from now on, add to these lists, and refer to them when you are planning your time, and when you want inspiration. Give yourself permission to experience more pleasure, in general, and in specific ways you plan into every day.



### Advanced Skill Building Practice

Give yourself permission. Can you think of one or more habits outside of food you have that you have tried to change without success?

List these, and select one to give yourself permission for now to keep doing.

Here's a few examples: If you spend time in the evening watching TV when you know your time would be more productively spent reading a book, give yourself permission to keep watching the TV for now. If you know you should wake up earlier to be more organized, but can't ever get that done, just give yourself permission to sleep the extra time for now.

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This week I give myself permission to continue:

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### Journaling Prompts: (Optional)

1. What areas of self-care are you good at, and what areas of self-care are challenges for you? Why? Where in your past did you learn this? Is it still serving you?
2. How do you feel about the concept of pleasure as an important aspect of healing your relationship with food? What comes up when you think about pleasure?
3. Do you find yourself caring for others and making plenty of time for work or other activities, leaving little time for your own self-care? Do you feel that you deserve self-care? Can you see how this is an aspect of self-worth?
4. Do you avoid self-care accidentally through dissociation, numbing or escape?
5. Sometimes we're putting self-care on the back burner because something else is *more* important. Answer this question, if I spent less time on work, chores, others, and made more time for me, I would lose/miss out on:  

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6. In what ways are you *not really* giving yourself permission for self-care?