

Our Emotional Attachment to Food

Food is our most conditioned source of comfort and pleasure. It has been conditioned as a source of comfort since we were given a bottle to stop our crying!



A huge barrier in losing weight permanently is your ability to identify how food is providing for your emotional needs. This is not easy because something that has been happening automatically since we were children becomes quite invisible—it just happens below our conscious awareness.

Comfort, Control and Reward are the three most powerful needs that food provides us.

1. **Comfort** from “stress” (anxiety, overwhelm, depressed)

We all need to feel happy and at peace. This is really just the natural state that occurs when you are free from negative feelings. For most of us, negative feelings “stress” is a daily part of our lives. If you have stress in your life, your brain will look for a “bottle” to provide relief from the uncomfortable feelings—the easiest and most common means is food.

2. **Control** from feeling a lack of control (I can do what I want)

If you feel most people control you (boss, others, kids, spouse, etc.), you will feel a need for control in your life. This is a feeling of needing to do what you want when you feel like your whole life is doing what others want. It’s really hard to choose an apple over a sweet snack when you lack “doing what you want” in other aspects of your life.

3. **Reward** from feeling a lack of recognition (I deserve a treat)

Nearly everyone feels underappreciated. Praise is a rare commodity. Criticism is common. It’s hard for us to appreciate others when we feel unappreciated ourselves. All we hear is what we did wrong at work and at home—what we forgot to do, what we missed or did wrong. The need to feel appreciation is usually met through self-reward—the easiest and most common means is food.

