

SESSION 11: Coping With Triggers



Session Focus

Coping with triggers can help you stick to your diet and physical activity goals.

This session we will talk about:

- Some unhealthy food shopping triggers and ways to cope with them
- Some unhealthy eating triggers and ways to cope with them
- Some triggers of sitting still and ways to cope with them

You will also make a new action plan!

Marta's Story

Marta has decided to improve her health habits and to try to lose some weight. She realizes she needs to rethink some of her routines.

On a typical workday, Marta gets up at 5:30 in the morning. As soon as she enters the kitchen, she starts making coffee. Just the smell helps her wake up. Then she warms up a pastry to dunk in her coffee.

By 3 in the afternoon, she's getting drowsy again, so she stops off at the coffee machine in the staff lounge. At the vending machine, she buys herself another pastry to dunk in her coffee.

Later that evening, Marta needs to unwind after a stressful day, so she curls up on the couch and watches TV. During one of the commercial breaks, she grabs a bag of chips and a beer.

What are some of the things in Marta's life that trigger her to act in unhealthy ways?

Marta decides to cope with her triggers. These days, she gets more sleep, so she doesn't get as drowsy during the day. She still has her morning and afternoon coffee. But instead of having a pastry for breakfast, she has some plain nonfat yogurt with berries.

Marta stays away from the vending machine at work. Instead, she nibbles on baby carrots.

Marta still watches TV to unwind after a stressful day. But she rides a stationary bike or lifts weights while she watches it. And now she has cut-up veggies for her evening snack instead of chips and beer.

TRIGGER	WAYS TO COPE	OTHER WAYS TO COPE
SHOPPING TRIGGERS		
I'm hungry	<input type="checkbox"/> Eat a healthy snack before shopping	
I feel sad/anxious/stressed or mad	<input type="checkbox"/> Put off shopping until you feel better <input type="checkbox"/> Cope with your stress in a healthy way, for example, take some deep breaths	
It's on sale or I have a coupon for it	<input type="checkbox"/> Find ways to save money on health items instead <input type="checkbox"/> Don't clip coupons for unhealthy items	
It looks tempting	<input type="checkbox"/> Stay away from aisles with tempting foods such as candy, chips and ice cream <input type="checkbox"/> Buy only a small amount (1 ice cream bar instead of a box) <input type="checkbox"/> Buy a healthier option <input type="checkbox"/> Keep in mind that the store's goal is to get you to buy things!	
I always buy this.	<input type="checkbox"/> Make a list and stick to it <input type="checkbox"/> Remind yourself that you are making healthier choices now <input type="checkbox"/> Try a different store, such as a farmstand	
It's for my spouse, kids or grandkids	<input type="checkbox"/> Show your love in other ways besides food	

TRIGGER	WAYS TO COPE	OTHER WAYS TO COPE
EATING TRIGGERS		
I'm hungry	<input type="checkbox"/> Eat something healthy <input type="checkbox"/> Stop when you feel full <input type="checkbox"/> Use a small plate	
I like to nibble on this while I watch TV	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid eating out of containers or large bags – get yourself a single serving and that's all <input type="checkbox"/> Knit, ride a stationary bike, use resistance bands or lift weights instead <input type="checkbox"/> Chew gum or nibble on raw veggies like carrots and celery <input type="checkbox"/> Watch less TV <input type="checkbox"/> Eat only in the kitchen/at the table	
I feel bored	<input type="checkbox"/> Go for a walk or do something else that needs to be done (mow the lawn, fold laundry, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Call a friend	
I have happy memories of eating this	<input type="checkbox"/> Change it to make it healthier <input type="checkbox"/> Share it with someone else <input type="checkbox"/> Have only a small portion <input type="checkbox"/> Make new memories of eating healthy foods	
This looks or smells tempting	<input type="checkbox"/> At home: Keep a supply of healthy items that you like ready (cut up veggies, popcorn, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Don't keep tempting items at home <input type="checkbox"/> Keep tempting items out of sight or hard to reach <input type="checkbox"/> At work: avoid walking by the vending machines or "free" food <input type="checkbox"/> Keep healthy snacks on hand	

TRIGGER	WAYS TO COPE	OTHER WAYS TO COPE
I see photos or videos of unhealthy foods	<input type="checkbox"/> Try not to look at them <input type="checkbox"/> Find photos of healthy foods	
I'm tired	<input type="checkbox"/> Try to get more sleep at night <input type="checkbox"/> Take a short nap	
I'm sad/stressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Ease your feelings in healthy ways, like a brisk walk <input type="checkbox"/> Call a friend or meet for coffee/tea	
My joints or feet hurt	<input type="checkbox"/> Find ways to exercise that take stress off your joints, like yoga or swimming	

Common Triggers

Common unhealthy shopping triggers:

- "When we go out to the movies, we always get a big tub of popcorn to share, plus some soda."
- "My family gets a pizza every Friday night."
- "I always stop off at the taco truck during my lunch break."
- "I keep cookies on hand for when my grandkids visit." "When I feel down, I pick up a container of ice cream."

Common unhealthy eating triggers:

- "I always have something sweet after dinner."
- "My friends and I always have chicken wings, beer, and chips while we watch the big game."
- "After church, my women's group has coffee and donuts."

Common triggers of sitting still:

- "My friends and I sit together in the cafeteria every day during lunch."
- "I always play video games after work."
- "My family plays board games all day on Saturdays."
- "When dinner is over, it's time for TV."