



WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS

Chapter 5 – Cheat Sheets

HELP, STRESS MAKES ME FAT!

Let's Recap – Three Reasons Stress Makes US Fat

1. Cortisol Release = Fat Storage and Increased Appetite
2. Brain Wants to Be Happy...With Sugar
3. Reptilian Brain Takes Over Logical Brain

There Are 5 Levels of Stress



The 5 “Stressed Brain” States

| Thoughts/ by State | Feelings | Relationships | Spirituality | Behavior |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. Abstract | Joyous | Intimate | Connected | Optimal |
| 2. Concrete | Balanced | Companionable | Aware | Healthy |
| 3. Rigid | Mixed | Social | Unaware | Moderate |
| 4. Reactive | Unbalanced | Needy, Distant | Disconnected | Unhealthy |
| 5. Irrational | Overwhelmed | Merged, Disengaged | Lost, Obsessed | Destructive |

Source: Laurel Mellin, PhD, "Wired for Joy", page 61

Experiment (Book p.134) Become AWARE of Your Level of Stress

| Moment of Day | Stress Level (1 to 5) | Why Are You Stressed? |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>This will help you understand your level of stress and what stresses you over the day</p> <p>Do it for at least 3 days</p> <p>Stress can be triggered by a person, a situation, an environment etc.</p> | | |

The Three Stress Relief Methods

- Visualization (Emotional Brain Training)
- Trick Your Brain
- "Breathing" and Other Relaxation Techniques

1. Five Minutes Visualization Exercise

- **“Create a vision or movie”**. It will give it a break for 5 minutes or longer
 - The brain will get its joy from the vision and calm down/forget the food
 - **It will think the vision is real!**
- Close your eyes
- Find a happy vision
- Make it very vivid: colors, smells, textures, wind in your hair, touch etc.
- Usually about an attachment
 - Children (mother/child)
 - Other people dear to you or moments in your life



2. Mindful Breathing Technique



- Breathe through your nose
- Feel your lungs entirely – not just the upper part, and count to 4
- Hold your breath, count to 4
- Exhale slowly and count to 4 as you exhale
- Repeat this cycle 4 times

Other: Alternative nostril breathing technique or just deep breathing for 5 minutes.

3. Trick Your Brain



Move the internal focus – obsession with that food at that moment – to an external stimulus

Start to breathe slowly and deeply (even in a meeting you can do this discreetly)

- Notice colors, smells, noises around you
- How do you feel (emotions?)
- Focus on an object in the room (a clock, a flower...)
- Wonder what it is made of, how much it weighs etc.

Stay focused on it for a few minutes.

Other Techniques

1. **Body scan:** from toes to crown of the head/release tension
2. **Focal or anchor words technique:**
 - Use the word “peace” on the inhalation and “calm” on the exhalation.
 - Imagine you are a flower (Session 3)
 - Use the words silently. Create your own words
3. **Enroll** in a weekly/daily meditation or relaxation class (yoga, swimming, sports, new hobby etc.)
4. **Take mini mental breaks...w/o your phone!**

EASY Things I Can Do to Eliminate Stress - Short Term

Look at your daily/weekly activities/habits. Make a decision now!

My Stress Elimination Plan (Long Term)

| My Stress Triggers | Assess the situation | Find a strategy |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| Family situation - Children or parents - Partner - Other | Why is this happening | How can I deal with it, minimize the impact, fix this, stop this, improve this, avoid this... |
| Work: - Deadlines/ Multiple priorities/ Demands - Colleagues/boss - Unemployed - Other | | |
| Money - Tax season - Problems with cash... - Debts/Credit cards - Other | | |
| Other (Disease, Life Events etc.) | | |

My Stress Elimination Plan (Long Term)

| STRESS | Assess the situation | Find a strategy |
|--------|----------------------|-----------------|
| | | |

To Summarize

- Observe and gauge your stress level every day (1 to 5)
- Take mini mental breaks and brain relaxation activities
- Eliminate stressors you can in the short term
- Write a plan for the long term
- Remember stress makes you eat sugar (not salads!) and makes you fat, even w/o eating!
- Chronic stress is linked to 90% of diseases including Type 2 Diabetes.