

This Week's Experiments



Experiment #1: Create your new PATs

Create your grid with your most common SATs and PATs and try to also see a pattern. Is this linked to specific situations? **Try to focus on your top 5.**

My Sabotaging Awful Thoughts/ Situations	My Positively Amazing Thoughts

What are you learning from this? Remember you have to add an ACTION to help your PAT create a new behavior, therefore pathway in your brain.

Create your list of ACTIONS. This experiment is about finding out what are your absolute worst craving triggering situations. For me at one point, it was to enter a Dunkin Donut®, because the view of the doughnuts initiated an irrepressible desire to have one. Then the whole morning unraveled and the sugar in the doughnut started a cycle of new cravings.

I realized I had to stop going there. Now by the way, I can go there, and I will not buy a doughnut anymore. I know their ingredients too well!

Instead, now, I go to another coffee shop or I bring a cup in my car with home brewed coffee. This is my new ACTION. My new PAT is: "I do not need these doughnuts. They do not nourish me and trigger an uncontrolled cycle of sugar craving. My coffee is enough to make me happy going to work. I just had breakfast!"

Date _____

Progress Notes

Experiment #2: Describe your new favorite healthy foods

Create a list of your new favorite, healthy foods. Now, associate each of them with positive words. Write these feelings and descriptions on paper. This will reinforce the experiment's value and convert new pleasure pathways in lasting memories.

Example: I just discovered I like eggplants and I learned to cook them in many different ways. How can I describe what I like about them? You could say:

- I like the beautiful, shiny skin and purple color of this vegetable
- I like the smell and taste of the eggplant especially when it has that burnt aroma
- I like the eggplant in a puree with garlic as it has this very unctuous texture
- It feels so smooth and creamy in my throat. I feel it is a God given gift from nature

Maybe you discovered you love kefir, a fermented and probiotic rich yogurt? Or maybe you just started to eat more fish and discover new ones like cod, skate, lemon sole, etc. Find a few new favorite healthy foods. The more you involve all your senses in an experiment, the more different parts of your brain get “illuminated” and help you change. The choice of specific words will elicit different responses. As an example the word “silky” will make you fire neurons in the brain touch-sensory area.

Take pictures of foods you love, healthy meals you love and take the habit of looking at them. Maybe put pictures in your diary or scrap book.

Date _____

Progress Notes

Experiment #3: Stand up for yourself at a party, or any gathering, even a family meal

You are at a restaurant with a group or at a party. It has to be an environment where you are not really in control of what is happening. You have to go with the flow while trying to stay in control.

Decide in advance (you can almost always see menus on line) or at the moment when you see the buffet or the menu about what you will eat and what you will drink.

Eat and drink slowly, especially if you are surrounded by big eaters or drinkers. Don't tell anybody you are doing the experiment but be conscious of what you put in your mouth. Enjoy the company and focus on the conversation, not what is in everybody's plate.

If they ask you to share a dessert, or want to pour you wine, prepare to say NO in a very polite yet firm manner. What can you say?

- Thank you, I had enough
- I am full, no room left
- I am not hungry anymore, really
- No drinking tonight, I am driving

Find your way of saying "no" in a nice way. How are others reacting?

- Are they teasing you?
- Are they or not paying attention to what/how you eat?
- Are they too busy enjoying themselves?
- Are they pushing you with remarks such as "ah, Emma is on a diet again?" or "party pooper, why can't you enjoy yourself, you can go on a diet tomorrow?"

What are you doing to stand up for yourself? Prepare your strategy next time you go out and you will be surprised to find out that a) people do not pay as much attention as you think to what you eat or drink and b) it is easier than believed to say NO politely, but firmly. Also pushing you to eat or drink, and share a dessert for instance, is their own way to give themselves permission to indulge – their SAT! They find an accomplice, so they take away half of their guilt.

Date _____

Progress Notes

Experiment #4: Be in control of your food

Write down your menu for the week and prepare your foods in advance, if you can. Bring your own food to work if you are based in an office. Or bring your own healthy choices to parties, as a gift, so at least you can stay semi in charge by eating what YOU want. You will be surprised at how many people will enjoy your healthy plate!

You do not have to do this perfectly. I do not want you to stress out. But apply the 80/20 rule. Be good in 80% of the situations. Even 70% is good enough when you start.

After the day or the party, write down the list of your insights and victories:

- What have you learned about yourself and others?
- Who is supporting you and who is sabotaging you?
- What were you able to control – like removing the cookie platter from the middle of the table?
- Maybe it is time to take some extra measures with your home or office environment – like the bowls of sweets on your desk?
- Maybe it is a good idea to stop going to lunch with Maria, because she always wants to go to rather unhealthy restaurants. Or maybe it is time to avoid the office kitchen for lunch because there is always cake and unhealthy foods tempting you there.

Date _____

Progress Notes

Experiment #5: Observe your fellow humans eating or shopping for foods

Just enjoy a day and walk in a city or in a shopping mall. Observe the multiple shops and stands where people can buy food or drinks. Become aware of the incredible multitude of opportunities we are being offered to buy something.

Are the food shops mostly healthy or unhealthy? Where do you see most people going? Just imagine you are writing a report about your observations.

Observe people walking with something to eat or drink in their hands. How do they eat while walking? On the same or another day, observe people eating in a restaurant or at a fast food place. How long does it take them to eat? How are they eating? How are they seated (are they even seated)? Look at their choices and portions. Look at their waist size, their personality etc. Be

discreet however! You do not want to look like you are spying on them.

Your homework is to select a few persons. Observe them, and then write their imaginary eating and general life style habits. How do you correlate the supposed lifestyle with the physical appearance and observed eating behavior? By understanding your fellow humans, you may find out a few things about yourself too. For instance, very revealing will be the person you select.

I recommend you select somebody who would be a role model and somebody who would not. At the end of your report, meditate on what you learned, including some possible preconceived notions.

This concludes this chapter which is a very important one again for getting at the root of your challenges. The CogniDiet® philosophy is that the more you focus on what you can do and what you enjoy, the happier you are.

If you only like fast food and sugar but you are reading this book, it means you want to change the way you eat. There is always a way when there is a will. There are so many healthy foods that I cannot believe you would not find a couple that would satisfy you and re-design your palate for new tastes and textures, while filling you with vibrant nutrients. This is what happened to Debra. She really changed and as I write this page, she must be approaching 70 pounds lost!

Debra's Story: Adopting New Behaviors

Debra is a wonderful lady who did my clinical trial and became our biggest loser. She lost 33 pounds in 12 weeks and by December 2017, or 12 months after the trial, she had lost 80 pounds. Let me tell you that she looks 10 years younger. She had a habit of eating mostly processed and sugary foods. "Eating healthy, cutting out sugar, processed foods and carbohydrates that are nutrient poor is not a new idea. So why is this time different for me? Why did THIS program work?" asks Debra.

"First, my motivation for starting the CogniDiet®, was not to "look better." It was to avoid becoming diabetic, a disease my mother and brother struggle to manage. "

Her eternal sabotaging thoughts were:

- I love bread, I can't give it up
- I don't want to give up sweets, that's my reward.

They became:

- I need to learn how to manage these cravings or I will become diabetic like my family.

She learned to stop “eating her emotions.” Sugar and carbs became less attractive and cravings diminished. Before, she would buy a pint of ice cream and eat it in one evening, always had cookies or cake in the house, and breakfast was coffee and a bagel or doughnut.

Her new behaviors:

- No sweets or white carbohydrates in the house.
- Keeping hard boiled eggs or oatmeal at hand for “on the go” breakfasts.
- Cake or ice cream are only for special occasions.

“A big “Aha” moment for me was doing my taxes after completing the clinical trial. In December 2016. When I was looking over receipts, I realized that prior to the CogniDiet®, every time I went into a store I was buying something sugary to eat. I was shocked. I had no idea I was in such a destructive pattern,” she said.

Now, instead of constantly buying sugary treats, she purchases good quality products, experiment with cooking new things that are delicious and healthy, and plans her meals. Mindless, emotional and stress eating were her safety net. “Learning to be mindful included really looking and seeing my physical self, something I’d avoided,” she says. The CogniDiet® also slimmed down her closet. She had held onto clothes in several different sizes, either in the hopes of getting back into them or in case she gained weight. “There is great freedom in not having closets that are packed with stuff that doesn’t fit. It makes room for all types of new things that have nothing to do with clothes,” she said. Debra has a new career, a new life and has completely re-invented herself in the process of losing weight.

[illegible][illegible]

CogniDiet® Book Club Discussion Guide

This week it's all about your old SATs, new PATs and behaviors. Observing yourself and others eating is an enlightening experience! I hope you have been good at capturing your thoughts in your diary. Writing, repeating, persisting is the way you will rewire your brain.

- **Share your new PATs, challenges and successes this week**
- **Have you discovered new healthy foods and recipes you like?**
- **Have you been in situations where you had to say “No, thank you”?**
- **What have you learned from observing other people?**
- **What are your goals for next week?**
- **How do you feel about yourself right now?**

Maybe it is time to plan a group outing in a “dangerous” restaurant? Navigate temptations together and choose a healthy meal. See how much fun you can have without a Pina colada and a chocolate cake!

Date _____

Progress Notes