

**“WHAT TRIGGERS YOUR EATING?”**

A variety of different events and thoughts can lead to inappropriate eating. The following self-test can help you gain greater insight into those cues that trigger inappropriate eating for you. Read each of the items and rate it on a scale from “1” to “10” according to how likely it is either to cause you to eat inappropriately, or to accompany inappropriate eating. Circle only one number for each item. Then add up your rating numbers, and enter the totals in the rating summary. The categories with the highest scores indicate the major problem areas you need to focus on in order to gain control of your eating behavior.

	Very Unlikely										Very Likely
<b><u>SOCIAL</u></b>											
1. Arguing or having conflict with someone.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
2. Being with others when they are eating.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3. Being urged to eat by someone else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
4. Feeling inadequate around others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b><u>EMOTIONAL</u></b>											
5. Feeling anxious or depressed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
6. Feeling happy or relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
7. Feeling bored or having time on my hands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
8. Feeling stressed or excited.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b><u>SITUATIONAL</u></b>											
9. Seeing an advertisement for food or eating.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
10. Passing by a bakery, cookie shop, or other enticement to eat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11. Being involved in a party, celebration or special occasion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
12. Eating out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b><u>THINKING</u></b>											
13. Making excuses to myself about why it's okay to eat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
14. Berating myself for being so fat or unable to control my eating.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
15. Worrying about others, or about difficulties I am having.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
16. Thinking about how things should or shouldn't be.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b><u>PHYSIOLOGICAL</u></b>											
17. Experiencing pain or physical discomfort.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
18. Experiencing trembling, headache, or light-headedness associated with no eating or too much caffeine.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
19. Experiencing fatigue or feeling overtired.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
20. Experiencing hunger pangs or urges to eat, even though I've eaten recently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

## SCORING

Add your rating scores for each of the items, and enter the total score for each set of items as indicated. Then rank order the scores by marking the highest score "1", the next highest score "2", and so forth. The areas ranking highest are the ones you need to focus on first. These are your biggest problem areas.

A score of more than 24 in any area is a high score and indicates you need to work on this particular area. Thus, if you obtained a score of "25" in SOCIAL, and this was your number one ranking score, you need to begin by focusing on handling social influences more effectively.

			Rank Order	
Items 1 - 4:	SOCIAL	Total Score =	_____	_____
Items 5 - 8:	EMOTIONAL	Total Score =	_____	_____
Items 9 - 12:	SITUATIONAL	Total Score =	_____	_____
Items 13 - 16:	THINKING	Total Score =	_____	_____
Items 17 - 20:	PHYSIOLOGICAL	Total Score =	_____	_____

## SCORE INTERPRETATION

**Social** - A high score here means you are especially susceptible to influence from other people. You need to develop skills in communicating more assertively, handling conflict, and managing anger. You also need to examine and challenge your beliefs about the need to be polite, and the obligations you feel you must fulfill.

**Emotional** - Emotions, both negative and positive, are important triggers for inappropriate eating for many people. A high score here means you need to develop skills in coping more effectively with emotions. You need to learn to avoid situations that produce emotions, and to react differently to upsetting events that do happen. You need to learn new ways to respond to old situations. Developing skills in stress management, time management, communication and thinking will help.

**Situational** - A high score here means you are especially susceptible to external influences. Perhaps you are creating this susceptibility by worrying too much about food, weight, and dieting. You need to learn whenever possible to avoid cues to eat, and to respond differently to those you cannot avoid. You need to rearrange your environment so that inappropriate eating is less likely. This involves changing the way you buy, store, cook, and serve food and the way you clean up afterwards. It involves anticipating potential problems, and planning ahead to handle them effectively.

**Thinking** - An important factor in inappropriate eating is the way you think - including how you talk to yourself, the pictures in your head, the beliefs you hold, and your memories and expectations. You need to learn to be less self-critical, less of a perfectionist, and more flexible in your beliefs about the way things ought to be. You need to recognize when you are making excuses or rationalizations that allow you to eat, and to focus your thoughts on the benefits to be gained from persisting in your weight management efforts, as well as the costs you will pay if you don't.

**Physiological** - Often the way you eat and what you eat, will affect your eating behavior. A high score here means you may be skipping meals, which can cause trembling or headache. Or you may be eating to reduce physical arousal or to deal with physical discomfort. Too much caffeine can cause your body to produce more insulin, which can produce low blood sugar and accompanying trembling and other physical symptoms. You need to eat three regular meals a day and perhaps plan regular snacks. In order to keep your blood sugar and your insulin at fairly even levels throughout the day.