



**stage 4:**  
**making peace with food**

**video 3 workbook**

use this workbook to help you implement the teachings from this video

Brought to you by Registered Dietitian, Intuitive Eating Counselor, and your diet-ditching gal pal behind @no.food.rules on Insta, Colleen Christensen!

**no food rules.**

# the emotional eating spectrum

This might surprise you but I'm not here to tell you to never eat emotionally again.

Food actually SHOULD be emotional. And it's okay to have a brownie on a bad day! But, will the whole pan of brownies FIX our bad day or will that actually make it worse because we still have the bad day itself PLUS now we have a tummy ache!

On one end of the emotional eating spectrum you have sensory gratification which is the most mild form of emotional eating, essentially, it's eating for pleasure. On the other end we have eating as punishment. This is when sedation eating becomes more frequent and intense. There is anger and a forcefulness to this eating. It can lead to loss of self esteem and self hatred.



Here are a few examples of each of these scenarios:

having a craving for chocolate and having some

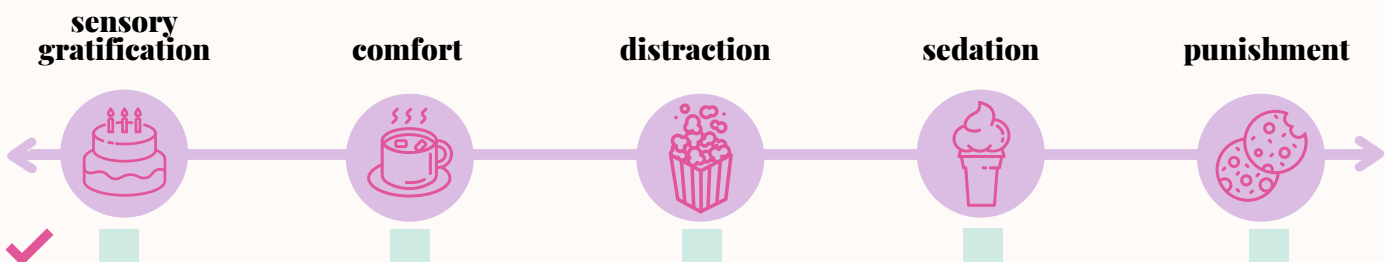
enjoying the experience of a warm mug of cocoa

eating brownies on a bad day to avoid thinking about it

soothing yourself after an argument with ice cream

anger eating potato chips after an argument

When you feel yourself eating for reasons other than hunger try to see if you can check the box of which form of emotional eating you're experiencing and if this choice is truly honor you, your body and emotions or if it's an experience of using food as your sole coping mechanism.



# identifying your emotions

In order to learn to cope with your emotions without solely using food we first need to be able to identify our emotions. This can be really hard if you struggle with emotional eating because you might be so used to avoiding them that it can be hard to even recognize them.

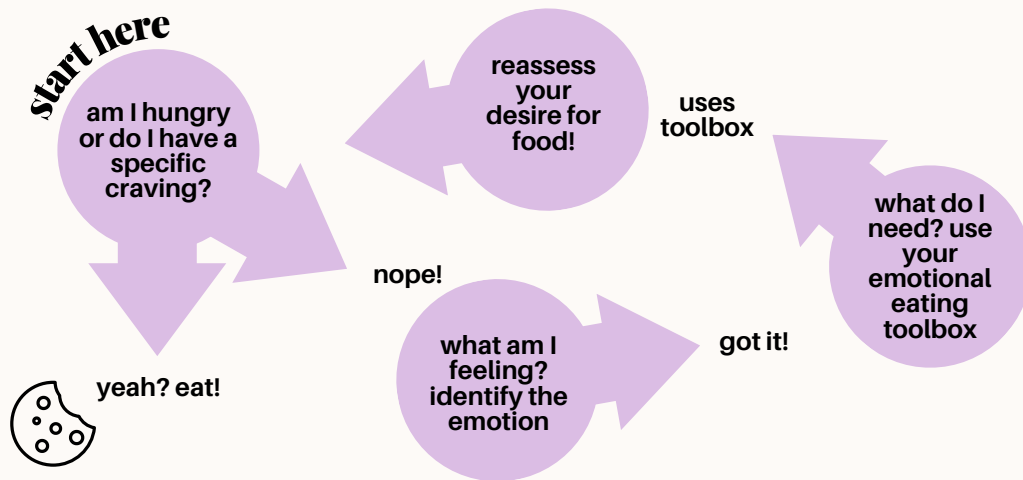
Here are some common emotional eating triggers to be aware of. Check the boxes of the ones that you may experience. Keep this list handy and when you feel like you may be emotional eating see if you can't identify which emotion you may be feeling.



- Bored or procrastination**
- Eating for a reward**
- Excitement**
- Soothing**
- Love**
- Frustration, anger or rage eating**
- Stress**
- Anxiety**
- Depression**
- Longing for connection**
- Relaxation or to unwind**

# the emotional eating algorithm

How to overcome using eating as your sole coping mechanism is called the emotional eating algorithm. This is a series of questions you'll ask yourself to help you navigate your emotions and coping with them.



**Am I hungry or do I have a specific craving?**

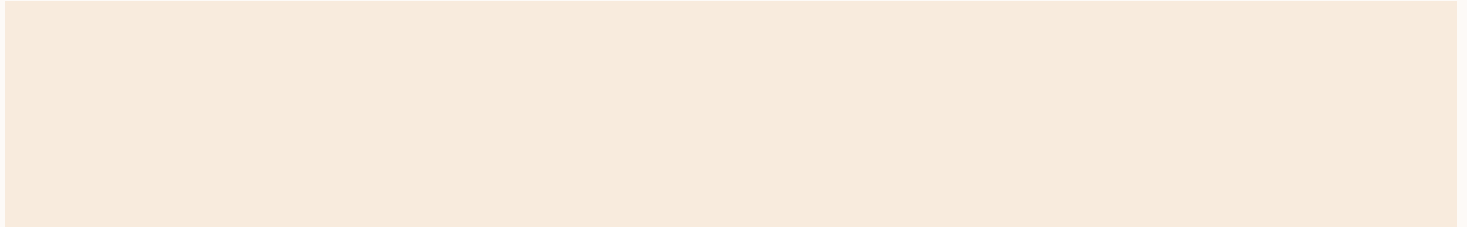
**What am I feeling? Can I identify the emotion?**

**What do I need? What tool from my emotional eating toolbox can I use? (see next page)**

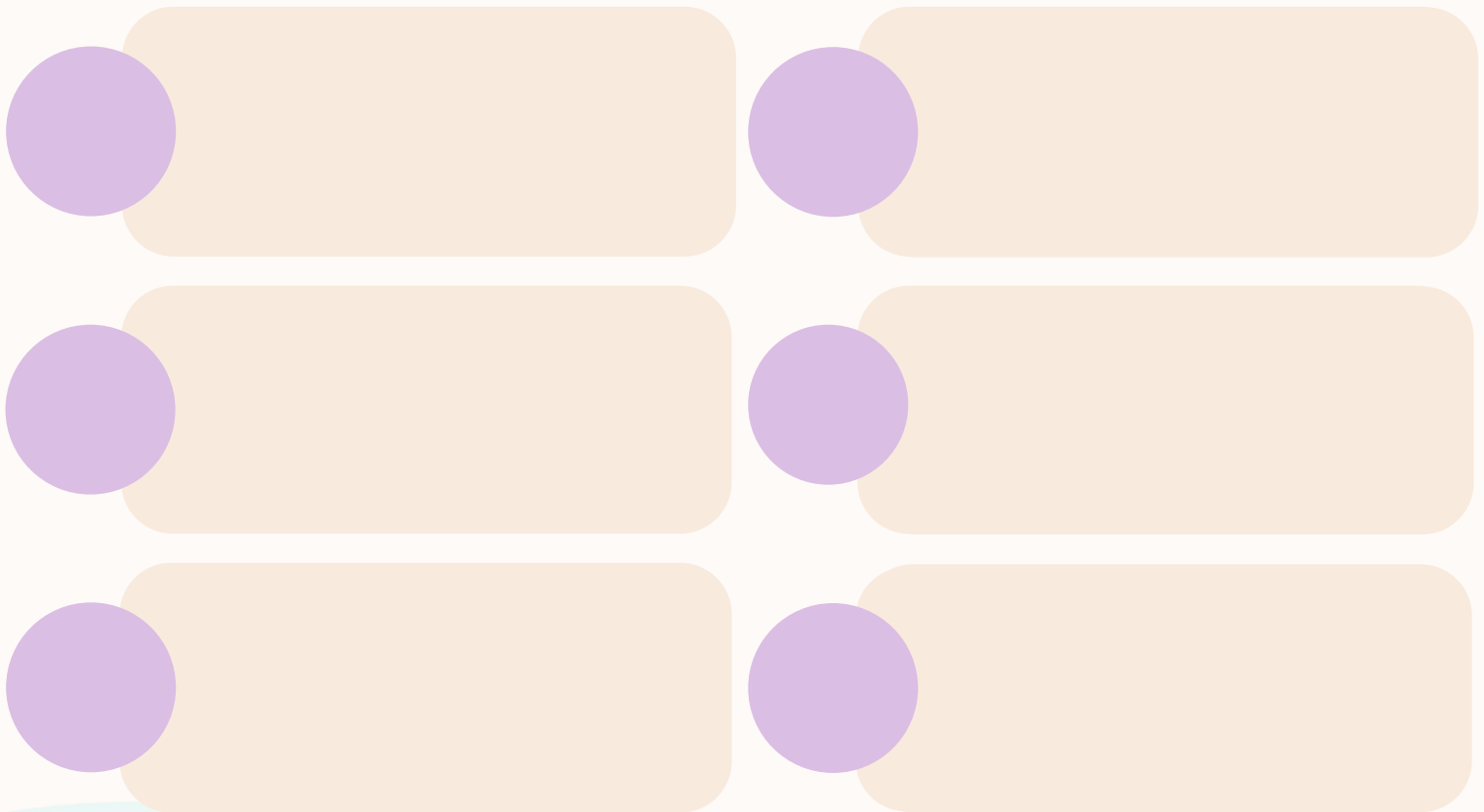
# your emotional eating toolbox

First, write down all of the common emotions that you feel. This is just going to be a place for you to start, you can always add to it later as you begin to notice emotions arise.

## Emotions that I commonly feel are...



Now, write each emotion in a circle and list 3-5 ways in which you can cope with that emotion in a constructive way. For example, if your emotion is boredom maybe you'd write: do a puzzle, paint my nails, walk the dog or start a new book. If it's stress, maybe you'd say take 5 deep breaths, make a to-do list, journal about how you feel, step away from the stressful task and take a walk around the block. Do this for each of your emotions.

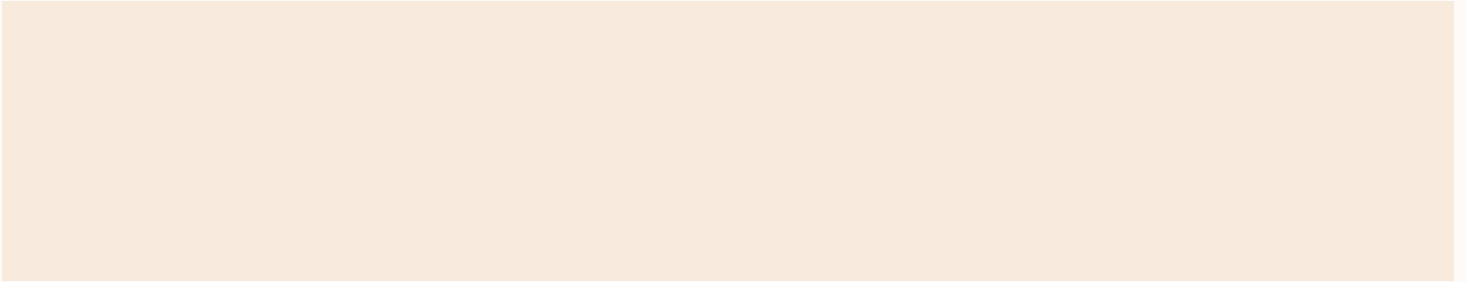


You've just made your emotional eating toolbox!

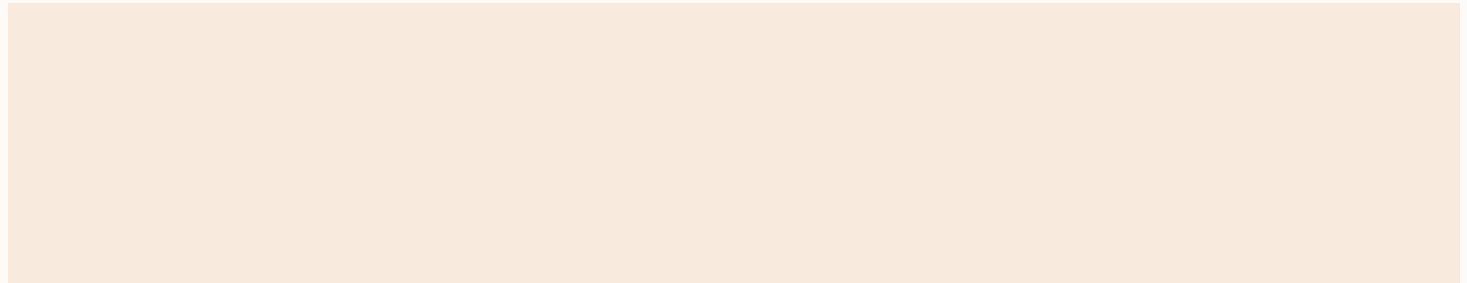
# emotional eating reflection

As with everything with intuitive eating this can take practice to do. So, if you realize you've experienced emotional eating, take time to reflect on this experience. Be sure to do this non-judgmentally. Imagine that you're just a scientist looking back on this and gathering data. You then take a look at the data and decide what to do with it for next time.

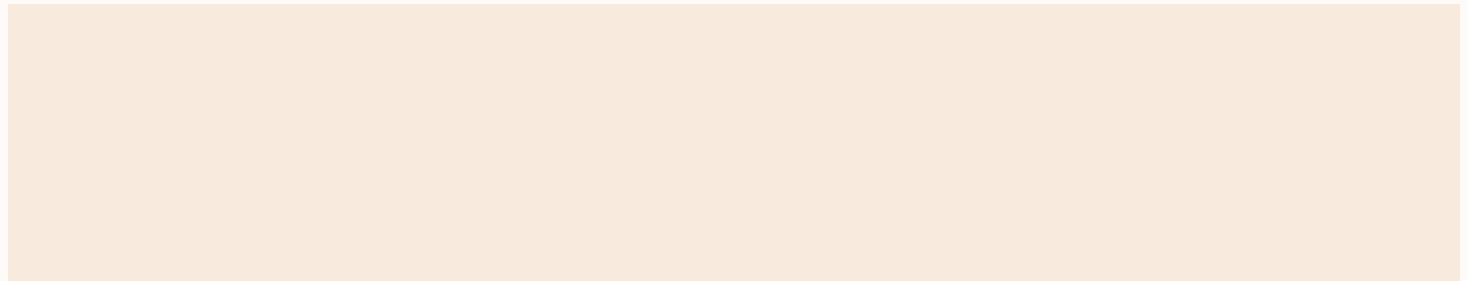
**Think about the experience overall, was it enjoyable or helpful?**



**If you did not enjoy the outcome, what might you do differently next time?**



**As for the emotion you felt, are there any other changes in your daily living that you can make to help alleviate or cope with this emotion before it escalates?**



# meeting your basic needs

Many people may struggle with more chronic emotional eating if one of their basic needs aren't being met. If you're not getting enough sleep, you're constantly stressed, or you're always giving to others this can lead to emotional eating.

Take a moment to check the boxes below of which basic needs you're meeting.



- I get enough sleep and rest (mental and physical), for the most part**
- My stress level is manageable, for the most part**
- I get enough food to eat (access, no restriction, etc.)**
- My schedule is manageable and not overbooked**
- I am able to express my feelings and be heard**
- I feel understood and accepted**
- I feel like I have a purpose**
- I get enough sensual pleasure**

Reflect on any of the boxes you were unable to check off and brainstorm ways in which you can meet that need in an effort to reduce using food as a sole coping mechanism for that unmet need.

**Adjustments that I can make to meet my basic needs are...**

# the sadness of saying enough

One sneaky little form of emotional eating is what's called "the sadness of saying enough". If you continually eat past fullness despite being hungry you might be experiencing this. This commonly shows up when someone says "I keep finishing my entire dinner even though I KNOW I'm full! It just tastes so good!" A lot of times this IS emotional eating.

Ask yourself the following questions and check the box if the answer is "yes".



- When the food on your plate is gone or when you recognize feelings of fullness/satisfaction do you feel sad?**
- When the food is gone is there an uncomfortable emotion/situation that you must return to? (Examples: putting the kids down to bed after dinner is stressful. you don't enjoy your job and lunch is your escape, etc.)**

If you checked either of the above boxes you may be experiencing the sadness of saying enough.

Yes, it can feel uncomfortable to sit with some of those feelings we are avoiding. But isn't it also uncomfortable to be too full? And then don't we still have those uncomfortable feelings to deal with? Would it be easier to deal with those if your body felt better, not overly full? Take a moment to reflect on this if you find yourself eating past fullness even if you know you're doing it or you know you've recognized fullness and satisfaction but keep going.

**My thought on eating past fullness even though I know I'm satisfied...**

This can also be true if you find yourself waiting for the next time you "can" eat. First, see if there is a restriction. If not, see if food is your sole source of joy or entertainment for the day, This can be a form of emotional eating. Begin to think about non-food ways to bring yourself joy!