

sidestep diversion eating

Picture this: You're sitting at your desk facing a major, daunting project on your computer—or you're at home at loose ends waiting for the electrician. You find yourself in search of a snack. For Stephanie, a Lifetime Member, that feeling tends to hit when things are quiet at work. "I'm not really hungry, I'm just bored, and the office is experiencing a temporary Iull," she says. "My mind immediately turns to passing the time with coffee and sugary snacks."

WHEN THE "I'M BORED" **URGE TO EAT STRIKES....**

The thing is, at those times Stephanie doesn't feel internally hungry at all: Her stomach isn't rumbling, lunch wasn't all that long ago, and her sights are trained on specific foods (a plate of roasted broccoli just won't cut it!). The desire to

eat out of boredom is called diversion eating. It can also crop up when you're putting off an unpleasant phone call, work task, or other to-do. Diversion eating isn't about physical hunger, it's a response to other cues. And if we repeatedly wind up reaching for a cookie to ease tedium or to avoid a task it's likely to become our go-to action, a habit.

...PUT THE BRAKES ON.

When you notice yourself eating to divert yourself (and yep, we've all done it!) pause and ask yourself what eating will achieve. You'll see that food isn't solving the problem of boredom or completing a task. It'll still be there after you finish eating. And what we call "unplanned eating" could leave you disappointed or regretful afterward, especially if you eat quickly without savouring the food.



Stephanie

2002 (2nd time!)

Tracking on the app and Connect, which changed my life. It gives me

support 24/7!



Alas, eating cookies won't make the laundry disappear! When you're facing a task vou don't like, ask vourself the questions on page 4.

Changing the environment you're in will help you focus on other things. Go for a walk, call a friend, stroll around a store."

Once Stephanie recognized that her urge to grab coffee and a sweet wasn't stemming from internal hunger, she broke the boredom-eating habit. "I get up and walk around the office or get outside, weather permitting," she says. "And I add to my FitPoints® for the day. It's a win-win!"

Other at-work solutions? Mindful breathing, gazing out the window, listening to a song on your computer... Like Stephanie, you can sidestep diversion eating by getting away from the scene. "Changing the environment you're in will help you focus on other things." Now that's a habit worth cultivating!

what to do

make the switch

Next time you notice yourself slipping into diversion eating, check the questions below to break the habit—and replace it with a nonfood solution. The more you choose this option, the sooner it will become your healthier go-to and the less likely you are to eat when you're bored or procrastinating. Ask yourself if eating (when you're not internally hungry) will really help...

... if you're bored:

"Will I still need to find something to do after? How will I feel after I eat? Will I be any less bored afterward?"

...if you're procrastinating:

"After I eat, will I still have the task to do? How will I feel? Will the task seem more appealing?"

Then, pick something to do instead of eating:

- ☐ Call or text a friend. ☐ Listen to a favourite song.
- □ Play a game on your phone.
- □ Do a different task
 (wash dishes, organize
 your desk, clear email).
 □ Break the task into
 smaller parts and tackle
 the first one.
 □ Head outdoors (or
 gaze out a window).
 □ Close your eyes
 and practice mindful
 breathing.
 □ Take a walk.
 □ Read a magazine.
 □ Go on Connect.
 □ Your own ideas:

FOLLOW UP The next time you feel a desire to eat when you're bored or procrastinating, ask yourself the questions above and do something else instead.



tip from a leader "I'm prone to eating out of boredom and procrastination sometimes. So I do the Green Bean test: If I'm hungry enough to eat green beans, then I'm internally hungry. If not, I get to the task at hand or distract myself from boredom. My favourite distraction: running!" -KENDRA, LEADER



Share how you #BeatBoredomEating on Connect in the mobile app (for subscribers).

think again

Interrupt the eating-as-diversion routine by asking what's going on when food's on your mind, but you're not internally hungry.

UNHELPFUL THOUGHT

"I can't find anything to do right now. Maybe I'll go see what's in the fridge."



HELPFUL THOUGHT

"Is there really nothing to do? Looking for food won't solve my boredom—I'll still be bored after and I'll regret eating. I'll straighten up the coffee table while I think of something to do."

UNHELPFUL THOUGHT

"Ugh, I have so much laundry to do. Maybe I'll just have some cookies first."



HELPFUL THOUGHT

"I don't feel internally hungry, and I don't really want cookies. Folding clothes isn't my favourite, but the laundry will still be there even if I do eat the cookies."

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	YOUR	
	TURN!	
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What unhelpful thought have you had recently about eating while bored or procrastinating? Write it. Now, reality-check that thought and write your helpful thought here.

UNHELPFUL THOUGHT	HELPFUL THOUGHT







FAST + EASY from weightwatchers.ca

chunky strawberryrhubarb sauce

1 SmartPoints® value per serving // PREP 15 min // COOK 3 min // SERVES 8

250 ml (1 cup) thinly sliced rhubarb 375 ml (1½ cups) hulled and quartered strawberries 30 ml (2 Tbsp) fresh orange juice 30 ml (2 Tbsp) honey

10 ml (2 tsp) balsamic vinegar

BRING a small pot of water to a boil over high heat: add rhubarb and cook until just tender, 3 minutes. Drain and rinse rhubarb under cold water to stop the cooking process; drain thoroughly. **COMBINE** rhubarb, strawberries, orange juice, honey, and vinegar in a bowl; toss well to coat.

YIELDS 52 ml (3½ Tbsp) per serving.

thoughts on my meeting...

Great stuff I heard.... helpful tips... what I'll work on!



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GET YOUR DRINK ON

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Available in participating meeting locations.



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