



# *The* HORIZON

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 01, JANUARY 2024

- To Sleep or Not to Sleep: Decoding the Secrets of a Restful Night
- To Break A Bad Habit
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- The Unwholesome Double E's - Emotional Eating

# DEAN'S DESK



Dear students, we at Grodno State Medical University strive to provide students with top-quality education, but that's not it. GRSMU is also a hub for Scientific, Cultural, and Sports related activities. We wholeheartedly acknowledge that International students are an integral part of our university, and we take immense pride in that. Grodno State Medical University is glad to work with students from different countries and provide them with a stage to represent their nation and culture.



**DEAN OF FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS  
DR. ALEKSANDER ALEKSANDEROVICH STENKO**

GRSMU celebrates its uniqueness in diversity, for in its true essence our university is a junction where students from various backgrounds and cultures come together as one big family. GRSMU has always encouraged students to explore further and beyond in every field they try their hands at. I hope that you like the novel concept of 'The Horizon' - a magazine that serves as a platform for the students to voice their opinions, share their takes and present their points of view.

'**The Horizon**' is a medium of extended communication where we can learn a lot from one another. I highly appreciate this initiative and personally support it. I look forward to reading the interesting blogs written by you.



# WELCOME TO THE HORIZON



“We all have fascinating stories to share!” For the longest time, I have had this idea of starting a magazine. But not just any conventional magazine, one that shall serve as a platform for the students and alumni of International faculty at Grodno State Medical University to share their stories. A platform that enables students to share their takes on various curricular and extracurricular aspects of medicine. Thus, the idea of **‘The Horizon’**, came to life.



**DR. MEHUL H. SADADIWALA, FOUNDER,  
CLASS OF 2023**

**‘The Horizon’** will be a creative intersection where students can freely give commentaries about Lifestyle, Culture, Productivity tips, and more. Throughout the years, many individuals at GrSMU have inculcated valuable skills and gained experience with a fair share of success in various disciplines. Maybe you run a successful YouTube channel or an educational website, or maybe you are a successful student-researcher or an educator, and so much more. 'The Horizon' enables students to share their personal experiences. The insights that you share will encourage other students to take further strides and explore future possibilities.

**‘The Horizon’** is supported directly by the Dean of the International Faculty, and it will operate under the supervision of the International Students' Scientific Committee. Students from 1st to 6th year, and even graduates, can submit their blogs to this magazine. The articles should directly or indirectly revolve around student life to share knowledge and the collective growth of students.

For inquiries and submissions.

📷 - grsmu\_science

✉ - grsmuscience4life@gmail.com, socialmedia3490051@gmail.com

# EDITOR'S DESK



“

As passion and curiosity for knowledge are key to expanding the horizons of our minds, I would like to express my appreciation to the International Students Scientific Society for granting me the opportunity to bring all the colors of our brilliant students to light.

Acting as the Editor-in-Chief from January to March 2024, I am honored and delighted to guide all our authors' hard work in providing our readers with the finest insights on the most fascinating subject matter. I invite all members to share your insights and discussions this new year as we explore the future of Horizon Magazine together.



”

**AROOSHA IBRAHIM**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (JAN-MAR, 2024)

“

Scientific articles have always caught my eye because of their informative and world evolving capabilities. For a successful research article to be born, a lot of minds have to come together such as those of researchers, authors, editors, media experts, and everyone else interested in the progress of science and technology. I strongly appreciate the dedication and diligent work everyone has been doing, I would love to be a contributor to this amazing Horizon family. I am enthusiastic to lend an audience to every genre to have a platform of inclusivity.

I'm honoured to be taking the mantle of editor-in-chief of the Horizon for 2024 and I am looking forward to upholding our journal's aims and goals

”



**MITCHELL MARTHA ARUFINU,**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (JAN-MAR, 2024)

And a message to our dearest readers, we would like to invite you all, students and alumni, to share with us the blogs that directly or indirectly revolve around student life, to share knowledge and experiences that has had an impact on your growth within and outside the bounds of our university.

Concluding, let us alter the limitations of our individual efforts and collectively explore limitless Horizons.

## Cover Credits

Fathimath Maaha

For enquiries and submissions.

📧 - grsmu\_science

✉️ - grsmuscience4life@gmail.com, socialmedia3490051@gmail.com



# TO SLEEP OR NOT TO SLEEP: DECODING THE SECRETS OF A RESTFUL NIGHT

This blog is about insomnia and the importance of sleep. The author has given insight about sleep hygiene as well as answered why some people can't sleep.

WRITTEN BY  
PASINDU DISSANAYAKE  
CLASS OF 2025

## “A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP”

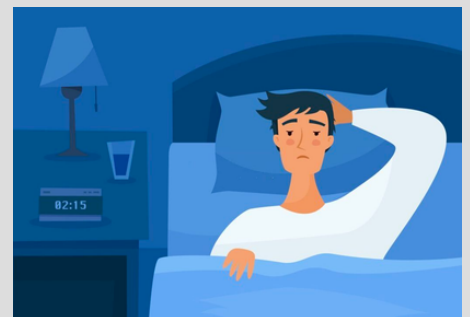
How often have you checked the time in the evening and seen it's already past midnight? In this modern day and age with our artificial lights and busy schedules sleep can sometimes fall by the wayside. Waking up in the morning to go for classes can feel almost impossible. Even after waking up it can feel like you didn't get a "good night's sleep".

One may be tempted to think that being sleep deprived is normal and a price we all must pay to keep up with modern lifestyle and responsibilities. Some of us may even develop "insomnia". Is the situation really as bleak as it sounds? Or is there something that we can do to finally get a good night's sleep?

## WHAT IS INSOMNIA?

"Insomnia", it's a word that is frequently used. But what does it really mean and how do you know if you have it? Insomnia is defined as having an impaired ability to generate sleep even though ample opportunity is given to sleep. True insomnia can be further divided into onset insomnia (difficulty falling asleep) and maintenance insomnia (difficulty maintaining sleep). To diagnose insomnia all these criteria have to be fulfilled

1. You are not satisfied with the sleep quantity or quality (difficulty in falling or staying asleep, early morning awakening)
2. You suffer significant daytime distress or impairment due to this
3. You have had sleep difficulty for at least 3 nights each week for more than 3 months
4. You do not have any coexisting mental disorders or medical conditions that could cause the sleeping difficulty
5. You have sleep difficulty even though you give yourself an adequate opportunity to sleep



If you meet all these conditions then you can be sure you have insomnia and should get more medical advice. But as you can see even though many people do suffer from classical insomnia it is not why the majority of us have poor sleep.

## SO IF IT'S NOT INSOMNIA WHY CAN'T MOST PEOPLE SLEEP?

Insomnia should not be confused with sleep deprivation which is what really causes sleep problems for most of us. Sleep deprivation is having the ability to sleep but not giving yourself the adequate opportunity to sleep.

What does "adequate sleep opportunity" mean? Think of sleep opportunity as the total time you spend in bed with the intent to sleep. This means without any distractions like checking your phone and turning off any bright lights. Why is this important? Because the time you actually sleep is less than the sleep opportunity you give yourself.. This is because it takes some time for you to fall asleep. For a healthy adult the ideal amount of sleep time is at least 7.5 hours. Therefore to get a sleep of 7.5 hours you should give yourself a sleep opportunity of at least 8 hours



## WHY IS SLEEP IMPORTANT?

Sleep is necessary for making new memories (to learn new things) and to save memories (to remember what you learnt for the long term)

Sleep is necessary for making new memories (to learn new things) and to save memories (to remember what you learnt for the long term)

- Boosts immunity
- Protects you from cancer
- Decreases risk of heart attacks, stroke and diabetes
- Lowers the likelihood of getting Alzheimer's
- Improves recovery after a workout
- Decreases the risk of obesity
- Solidifies things you practiced (Like learning a new guitar strumming pattern/practicing a new type of stroke in swimming)

## SLEEP HYGIENE

Like our daily hygiene, sleep hygiene is also something we can work on and improve

- By far the most important thing is to wake up and go to sleep at the same time each day (So set a time for sleeping as well and not just for getting up)
- Avoid coffee in the afternoon (Effects of caffeine can last for 6-8 hours)
- Don't eat large meals at night (can cause reflux)
- Take naps but not after 3pm (Naps later than this will decrease the adenosine buildup and prevent you from feeling naturally sleepy at night)
- Try to get some sunlight exposure in the morning and keep the room dark when going to sleep
- Don't force yourself to sleep. If even after some time you find it difficult to fall asleep do a relaxing activity (reading, listening to music) until you naturally feel the urge to sleep

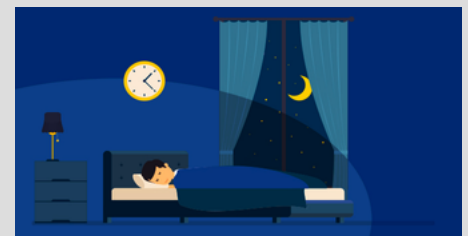


## CONCLUSION

Even though our poor sleep hygiene may have caused us to be sleep deprived, it does not have to be this way. By following these steps we can gradually build a better routine in which we give our body the amount of sleep it really needs.

As mentioned, before it will reward us with a whole host of benefits. And the extra time which you spend for sleep will also be compensated as you will spend less time learning and restudying material, less time practicing and less time recovering from illnesses.

So tonight as you fall asleep and you slip into the realm of sleep, know that you're in good hands and you're being recharged and energized to take on the next day.



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# TO BREAK A BAD HABIT

This blog inspects the thin veil of human shortcomings and despite how addictive it maybe, the possibility of overcoming them

WRITTEN BY  
E. SADEESHA CHELSY  
FERNANDO  
CLASS OF 2024

## HABITS OF OURS

You wake up every day, switch off the alarm, pour yourself a cup of joe, and begin readying yourself for the upcoming dreadful hours. Seems rather normal, doesn't it? As you repeat this process day in and day out for a while, it becomes a natural part of your behavior, up to an extent where you can perform these menial tasks half asleep. These settled and regular patterns of behavior are called habits.

Habits are first cobwebs, then cables” is a Spanish proverb that relays the message that bad habits can start with innocent experimenting and then move to conscious choice until finally, one day, they take control and lead to full-blown addictions.



## WHO IS IN CHARGE ?

Much like modern day society our brain prefers ventures with a payoff. The dopamine pathways governs our reward based attitudes.



Whenever we enjoy a bite of chocolate or even nibble our nails during an exam, these pathways fire up to reduce stress and increase pleasure. Well, how does this seemingly innocent system lead us astray? The problem lies in its inability to differentiate between good or bad stimuli, bringing about the reward. So, it tells you that eating feels good, but also so would smoking.

The story begins at the ventral tegmental area (VTA), which is a dopamine-rich nucleus that covers part of the midbrain and directs dopaminergic action potentials from the nucleus accumbens, often called the pleasure center of the brain. Thus, whenever a person encounters pleasurable stimuli (such as food, sex, drugs, etc.), dopamine is released and sends signals from the VTA to the Nucleus Accumbens, creating positive feelings that reinforce the behavior. This is called the Mesolimbic dopaminergic pathway.

## UNDERSTANDING WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO ?

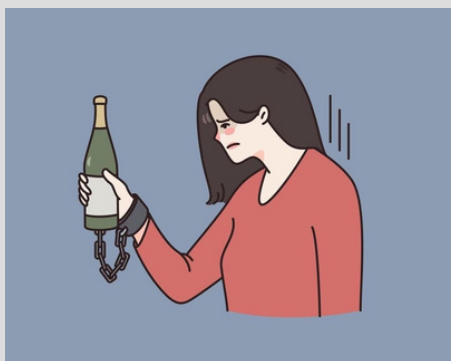
Let's apply this theory to several of the most common addictive habits, exploring the scope of smoking. This \$0.63 per treat knows its way around the dopamine pathway as it enhances the release of dopamine every time you puff. As long as nicotine is present, this statement stays true for all users of the OG cigars, cigarettes, and even the cool new vapes.

Similarly, whenever you down a glass, more dopamine is produced, keeping the good times going. As this positive illusion lingers innately, making you think that another glass or two won't hurt. So you keep guzzling more, letting the cycle repeat itself.

Furthermore, alcohol enhances the effects of GABA, which is an inhibitory neurotransmitter that promotes relaxation and reduces anxiety, simultaneously inhibiting glutamate, which is an excitatory neurotransmitter involved in learning, memory, and motivation. As a whole, these contribute to the entertaining effects of alcohol.

With time, tolerance builds as copious amounts of alcohol are needed to achieve the same effects. And as the brain relies on alcohol for its dopamine fix, dependence develops.

It is important to note that these effects can vary among individuals since genetic and environmental factors also play a role in the development of alcohol addiction.



## TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

Breaking a habit of any kind is truly easier said than done. Here are some tools to navigate these tricky trenches on the path to recovery.

### 1. MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness invites us to view our detrimental habits beyond the surface. For instance, let's say your first glass of wine or cigarette was at a party surrounded by friends or family. It potentially might have reduced your anxiety and assisted in socializing. So your brain remembers this sense of relief and applies it to any stressful life situation, nudging you to take a sip or a puff.



So what if we took a step back and were present in the moment, actually thinking about what we are doing in a more curious manner? Maybe we might taste the bitterness of the alcohol, the dryness of cigarette smoke on your throat, or the stench left on every article of clothing. Therefore, our brain can be reprogrammed to create a sense of aversion to these behaviors.

Dr. Judson Brewer (MD, PhD, neuroscientist, author, psychiatrist) explains how this works in the book "The Subtle Mind" in four main steps: R = Recognize, A = Acceptance, I = Investigate, N = Note.

It's simply to accept the habit for what it is rather than running away from it. Be curious on what brings about this habit and make mental notes on how it makes you feel. Understand the purpose behind its repetition, and finally, see it for what it really is.

### 2. AVOID TEMPTING SITUATIONS

Through our own experience we can scope out some compromising situations we put ourselves which positively reinforces our bad habits. If you know going to a bar to meet a friend might lead to a binge drink, try meeting up at a cafe. Keep the solutions simple as possible so as not to get overwhelmed by the process

### 3. REPLACE IT WITH A HEALTHIER HABIT

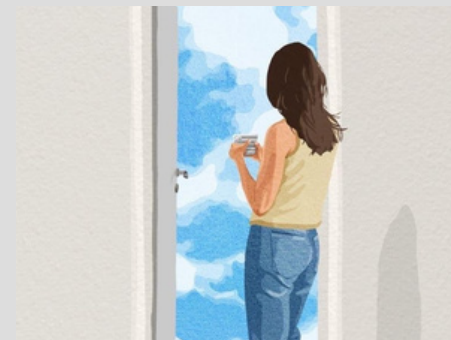
This is a personal choice to be made as what we choose should be of equal reward, but better quality than the bad habit. Taking up a hobby may help to refocus your mind, and settle it to gain and seek pleasure in better habits. But replacing doesn't necessarily erase the original bad habit since learned behaviors remain in your brain. Therefore be active in strengthening healthy habits.

### 4. SEEK SUPPORT

As if having a bad habit isn't bad enough, trying to recover on your own can be tiresome. This often leads us to fall back into our comfort zone of living with it rather than changing it. So by seeking support from people and institutions that understand you and your struggles are cornerstones in bringing about actual change

### 5. PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION

Journey to recovery isn't always easy. So don't be discouraged if you don't see perfection instantly. Be prideful for the ability to understand yourself enough to initiate change, and thank yourself each day for trying.



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3. <https://drjud.com>



# A.I - THE JARVIS OF DOCTORS

This blog explores the collaborative relationship between doctors and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare, illustrating AI as a valuable ally

WRITTEN BY  
ANMOL NIMAVAT  
CLASS OF 2024

## INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered how doctors and technology work together to keep us healthy? Think about what if doctors have super-smart computer friends called AI (Artificial Intelligence), and they team up to make sure we get the best care possible. This partnership isn't about robots taking over; it's about humans and AI working side by side to make healthcare even better. It's like having a trusted ally who can help doctors find out what's wrong and how to fix it.

## A.I.- JARVIS OF DOCTORS

You know how superheroes have their trusty sidekicks? Well, doctors and nurses have one too, and its name is AI, which stands for Artificial Intelligence. But you can also call it the "Jarvis" of the medical world—just like Tony Stark has Jarvis in the Iron Man movies! It's like the super-smart friend that helps doctors and nurses in amazing ways. It doesn't wear a cape or a mask, but it's always there for help.

Like Jarvis, AI never gets tired, and it's a super-fast learner. It's like having a memory that never forgets and a giant library filled with medical wisdom. When doctors and nurses team up with AI, they can make really smart decisions about our health because they have this super-smart helper working with them.

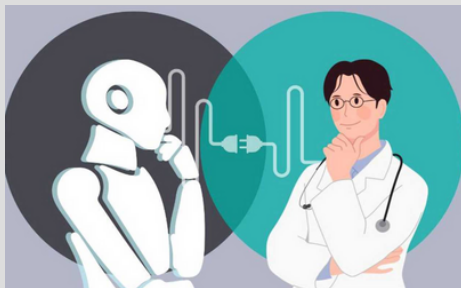


## HOW A.I. AND DOCTORS WORK TOGETHER?

AI is like a medical detective. It starts by looking at all the information it can find about you. That includes your medical history, the tests you've taken, and even information from other people who've had similar symptoms.

It's like searching for clues in a giant puzzle. It can spot patterns and connections that might be really tricky for a human to see. It goes through all this information lightning-fast and says, "Hey, based on what I've seen, it could be this particular problem."

But here's the good part is AI doesn't make the final call. It's like a trustworthy friend giving suggestions. The doctor takes these suggestions, looks at your symptoms, and makes the diagnosis. They might say, "You know what, AI? You're onto something. It looks like our patient has a certain illness."



### THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE WITH AI

The future of healthcare is about making your life healthier, easier, and more enjoyable, and AI is here to make sure you feel your best!

#### Custom Health Solutions

AI can make special body parts and devices just for you. It's like having a magic maker. If you need a new knee or a unique heart valve, It can create it exactly for your body.

#### Super-Smart Diagnoses

AI can find illnesses faster and more accurately. It looks at all your health information and says, "I think it might be this." Then, doctor checks and makes the final diagnosis.



#### Healthcare tips

AI helps you stay mentally and physically fit with personalized plans. It suggests exercises, mental health tips, and even reminds you to take care of yourself. It's like a wellness buddy. The future of healthcare is bright, and it's all about making sure you live your happiest, healthiest life.



#### A.I. NEVER REPLACE DOCTORS

AI doesn't replace your doctor's wisdom-- it adds to it. It is a powerful tool in a doctor's toolkit, like a stethoscope or an X-ray machine. It's there to make their jobs more efficient and accurate, not to replace their judgment. Doctors provide the vital human touch, empathy, and emotional support needed in healthcare. Medicine is complex, often involving ethical and critical decision-making, areas where AI falls short.



#### CONCLUSION

Just as Tony Stark and Jarvis make an unbeatable team in the world of superheroes, AI and doctors form an alliance that promises a healthier and happier future for all of us. AI doesn't replace doctors; it's here to support them. It helps doctors solve medical mysteries faster and more accurately, like a brilliant detective. But doctors bring something AI can't: the heart and soul of healthcare.

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2. <https://www.ibm.com/blog/the-benefits-of-ai-in-healthcare/>



# THE UNWHOLESOME DOUBLE E'S - EMOTIONAL EATING

This blog is about emotional eating. It explains different causes and ways of eradicating emotional eating.

WRITTEN BY  
THEHANI SINGALAXANA  
CLASS OF 2024

## EMOTIONAL EATING

Emotional eating, also popularly known as stress eating, comfort eating, or hormonal eating, is a phenomenon that's present in all humans of all age groups. A mechanism of coping, in its own shape and form, that 'helps' us deal with distress. We don't always turn to food to fulfill physical hunger; instead, we seek food for comfort, to ease stress, or to reward ourselves. And when we do, we tend to look for anything that will fulfill our sweet tooth, our inner junk monster, or simply reach for unhealthy eating options. When you're feeling low, you might grab an ice cream cone, order a bucket of sizzling hot KFC if you're bored or lonely, or drop by your local drive-through after a long day at work.



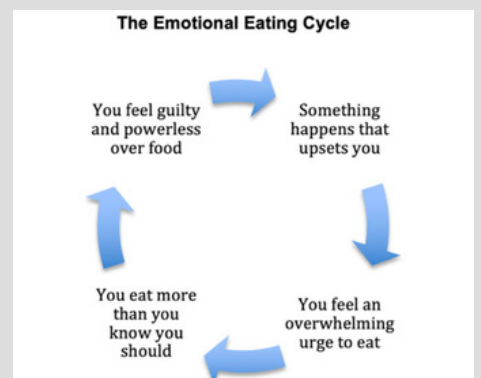
## WHAT IS EMOTIONAL EATING?

Emotional eating is when someone uses food to soothe their emotional needs instead of satisfying their physical hunger. It regrettably, rarely resolves emotional issues; rather, it frequently makes them worse. As such, not only does the original emotional issue still exist, but guilt about overindulging in food also surfaces. One can judge if he or she is an emotional eater probably by answering the following questions!

- Do you reach out to food when you're stressed?
- Do you ever overindulge in food in an attempt to comfort yourself during stressful or upsetting moments?
- Do you see food as a means of reward?
- Does food provide you with a sense of security?
- Do you perceive food as a companion?
- When is the right time to eat—(when you're full or not hungry)?
- When it comes to food, do you feel helpless or out of control?

## EMOTIONAL EATING CYCLE

Rarely using food as a means to boost oneself, as a form of reward, or to commemorate an occasion is not necessarily an immoral act. We all engage in this behavior! However, when consuming food becomes your primary method of emotional coping—when opening the refrigerator is your first impulse when you're anxious, upset, angry, lonely, or bored—you find yourself trapped in a harmful cycle where the underlying issue is neither acknowledged nor resolved. Emotional cravings cannot be appeased through consumption. Although overindulging in food may provide brief satisfaction, the underlying feelings that caused the desire to eat persist. In most cases, you will ultimately find yourself feeling even more miserable than before due to the surplus calories you have consumed. Moreover, this problem becomes even more complicated when you are unable to acquire healthier techniques for handling your emotions. Consequently, controlling your weight becomes more challenging, and you begin to feel more vulnerable to food and your emotional state. Nevertheless, no matter how helpless you may feel, it is always possible to bring about a beneficial transformation by adopting healthier approaches to dealing with your emotions, avoiding triggers, conquering cravings, and eventually stopping emotional eating.



## DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL(EMOTIONAL) EATING

In order to liberate yourself from the pattern of emotional eating, it is crucial to understand the difference between psychological and physical hunger. This has been proven to be more challenging than it appears.

Emotional hunger possesses a strong force, making it simple to confuse with physical hunger.

### HERE IS HOW TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE TWO

- Psychological (emotional) hunger strikes without warning while physical hunger grows gradually.
- Psychological (emotional) hunger perceives an immediate necessity for gratification while physical hunger has the capacity to be postponed.
- Psychological (emotional) yearns for particular nourishment that brings solace while physical hunger presents a multitude of possibilities—numerous choices appear appealing.
- Psychological (emotional) fails to find contentment in a satiated abdomen while physical hunger ceases upon reaching satiety.
- Engaging in emotional eating elicits sensations of remorse, helplessness, and disgrace while eating to satisfy bodily hunger does not lead to a negative self-perception.

To begin with, you need to determine what your unique triggers are.

Which circumstances, locations, or emotions causes you to crave for comfort from food? Emotional eating is frequently associated with negative emotions, but it can also be caused by happy emotions, like celebrating a successful goal or receiving a reward.

### COMMON CAUSES

#### 1. Stress:

It's not merely a figment of your imagination. When stress becomes chronic, as it is often the case in our hectic, fast-paced society, the body produces excessive amounts of cortisol. Savory, sweet, and deep-fried foods that make you feel happy, energetic, and satisfied are the kinds of foods that cortisol makes you crave. The greater the amount of overwhelming stress you experience in your life, the higher the likelihood that you will turn to food as a means to comfort your emotions.

#### 2. Suppressing emotions:

Consuming food can serve as a temporary method for muting or "suppressing" unpleasant emotions, such as fear, anxiety, solitude, resentment, and shame.

#### 3. Boredom:

Sometimes, you might find yourself reaching for food to pass the time, get out of boredom, or satisfy a need in your life. Feelings of discontent and emptiness set in, and food offers a simple way to keep your mouth occupied and kill time. Fortunately and unfortunately, it satisfies you at that exact moment and diverts your attention from underlying emotions.

#### 4. Early life patterns:

Think back to your early memories of eating. Did your parents give you your favourite treats as a reward for good behaviour, take you out to pizza after you received a good report card, or serve you a big bowl of chocolate chip ice cream when you were having a rough day? These tendencies frequently continue into adulthood.

#### 5. Social influences:

While getting together for a meal with others is a wonderful way to decompress, it can also lead to overindulgence. The availability of food, the fact that other people are eating, or even your own discomfort can all lead to overeating.

### WHAT ARE THE STEPS TAKEN TO MANAGE THE SITUATION?

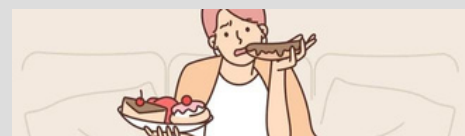
To put an end to this, you must discover alternative methods to satisfy your emotional needs. Even though it's a crucial first step, knowing your triggers and the pattern of emotional eating are insufficient on their own.

- If you feel depressed or lonely, reach out to someone who always brightens your mood, engage with your beloved pet, or spend quality time with your family or friends - it doesn't harm anyone to be a social butterfly occasionally!
- Go for a quick walk, or dance to your favourite music to let go of any anxiety you may be experiencing.
- If you're feeling down, curl up with a warm blanket, light some fragrant candles, enjoy a steaming cup of tea, or treat yourself to a massage.

- To relieve feelings of monotony, one can partake in activities such as immersing oneself in an enthralling book, expressing oneself through writing or drawing, watching a comedy show, exploring the outdoors, or engaging in activities that bring happiness (such as carpentry, playing the guitar, or shooting hoops). The possibilities are limitless!
- Learn to embrace your feelings, even the negative ones. It is always easier to indulge and "forget it all momentarily," However, eating for "relief" won't be a big issue if you can control your emotions!
- Eat mindfully, take your time, and enjoy your food. It is important to note that, eating while operating a vehicle, watching TV, or using a phone can keep you from completely appreciating your food.
- Recognize the different phases of your monthly cycle and do not feel guilty about giving in to your cravings, but do not excessively indulge in "hormonal binges." Keep it under control!

### TAKE A FIVE MINUTES BREAK BEFORE SUCCUMING TO A DESIRE:

- Could you wait five minutes to eat? Or start with just a minute. Remind yourself that the forbidden is always very tempting, so don't fool yourself that you can't indulge the craving. Simply take a deep breath and instruct yourself to wait.
- While you are waiting, reflect on yourself. How do you feel about yourself? What emotions are you experiencing? Even if you ultimately give in, your comprehension of the motivations behind your behavior will improve. You can use this to reset so that you react differently next time.



### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, indulging in eating to satisfy cravings or rewarding yourself after a long, exhausting day is perfectly acceptable, as long as giving in to emotions does not become a habit. Make sure you sleep at least seven hours a day, exercise frequently, and socialize more to relieve stress. Remember where there is a will, there's a way!

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1. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/diets/emotional-eating.html>
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6137864/>



## Our Editors

- 1 Mehul Hitesh Sadadiwala (Jan-Mar, 2023)
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