

why turning to food for therapy isn't a good idea

Comfort eating, emotional binge eating, food therapy—the behavior goes by many names, but at its core, it's the same: turning to food as a means of support. Here's why you should resist the temptation to eat your pain away.

What begins as a bandage turns into a habit.

Your stomach is a creature of habit. After repeated comfort eating sessions, your body quickly starts to crave more of the same on a routine basis. You may begin comfort eating as a way to cope with a particularly stressful week, but you'll soon find the desire for more "food therapy."

The best comfort foods are rarely healthy.

Few people turn to raw vegetables or lean meats for comfort. When we're feeling down, the tasty foods we tend to crave are loaded with calories and additives. We also desire the feeling of fullness these foods bring—meaning we tend to overeat. Combined, these two aspects of comfort eating can create a serious health risk.

It's not healing.

Comfort eating is a form of escapism, not therapy. You're not addressing the source of your struggles when you use food to feel better. Instead, you're just numbing the pain. This creates a vicious cycle where your problems continue to exist while you continue to indulge in unhealthy food for momentary relief.



healthy alternatives to emotional eating



Exercise floods your body with endorphins and elevates your mood. Whether it's yoga, weight lifting or a leisurely walk, you can't go wrong with making this your comfort habit.



Socializing can have massive benefits for your mental health. Simply calling up an old friend in the moments where you're craving comfort food can redirect the urge and leave you feeling more satisfied than if you had binged.



Creative endeavors like painting, writing or singing take your mind off your issues in the short term and leave you feeling fulfilled in the long term. The human brain gets a boost from the feeling of progress, and these activities provide it in spades.