**Emotional Eating**

Sometimes, when people are sad, stressed, or lonely, they eat too many unhealthy foods. Doing this makes some people feel better while they are eating. Sometimes they feel worse afterwards. Not everyone reacts to negative emotions by eating. Take this self assessment to find out if you use food to cope with bad feelings. You will want to carry this with you for three days. Write down everything that you eat, when and where you eat, and how you feel before you eat. Your feelings can include, but are not limited to: happy, sad, bored, lonely, neutral, tired, angry, hungry, or stressed.

**Day #1**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Food or drink consumed | Where were you? | How did you feel? |
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**Day #2**

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| Time | Food or drink consumed | Where were you? | How did you feel? |
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**Day #3**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Food or drink consumed | Where were you? | How did you feel? |
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After you have tracked your food intake for three days, go back and circle any negative feelings (sad, bored, angry, stressed, tired, annoyed, etc.).

If you circled more than three negative feeling/food pairs above, you might be an emotional eater.

Answer the following questions:

1. What trends do you see in your eating patterns (e.g., do you always eat sweets when bored)?
2. If you use food to cope with bad feelings, what healthy activities can you substitute for eating to help you feel better (e.g., taking a walk, talking to a friend, calling home)?
3. Environment is a common trigger for eating. What do you notice about the places you eat and the foods you eat? For instance, do you always eat sweets when watching TV? Do you drink soda while in the cafeteria? What is it about the environment that triggers these behaviors?