



The FACE WEIGHT LOSS Program NEWSLETTER Number 10
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FEELINGS AND EATING

Feelings play a complex role in determining when we eat, what we eat, why we eat, and whether we overeat. People use food in an attempt to satisfy a variety of emotional and physical needs.

What are examples of reasons we eat other than physiological hunger? We eat:

To stifle feelings or numb intense feelings

To avoid difficult issues by escaping from reality

To calm down and relax

To feel comforted and cared for

To alleviate boredom or to fill an emptiness

To procrastinate and avoid other responsibilities

To feel energized

To feel punished

To feel rewarded

Stress has been defined as intense feelings combined with physiological reactions and the perception that the demands we face are more than we can handle. **Many people associate overeating with feeling stress and it is important to learn to disconnect eating as the main response to stress.**

Eating often masks real feelings and cannot make feelings go away. Eating only cures hunger. **Relief from food is only temporary and creates additional negative feelings** such as guilt, self-blame, and hopelessness. Because eating cannot truly relieve stress and uncomfortable feelings, we overeat in the hopes of finding satisfaction which is not there. **We need to develop an awareness of our feelings and learn alternative ways of coping with them.**

At the FACE Program we have developed the **Feelings Awareness Process** to break the bonds between feelings and eating. You can learn more about the process in next month's newsletter.

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