



PSYCHOLOGISTS & COUNSELLORS

172 Majors Bay Rd, Concord, NSW 2137

ph: 02 9736 2721 – fax: 02 9736 3688 – email: [info@psychmatters.com.au](mailto:info@psychmatters.com.au) – [www.psychmatters.com.au](http://www.psychmatters.com.au)

## Compulsive Over eating – and achieving weight loss

- This is not about food or about willpower. It is about your willingness to do the internal/psychological/spiritual work that you need to do. Find out or decide what you need to do to lose the weight, then ask yourself (each morning) what you are prepared to do to lose it.

Three questions to ask yourself

*What do I need to do today to make my body the way I want it to be?*

*What do I need to do today to be the person I want to be?*

*What is the minimum effort/ action I could take today?*

**What needs to change is your beliefs and behaviour towards food, weight, eating and dieting. You need to change your beliefs in order to:-**

- 1. Put food in its proper place. The battlefield is food, but the battle is not. The battle is about serenity of mind, control issues and feelings that are being avoided.
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- 2. Change your self-image. Body image and self-image are not the same thing. Do you believe that what you weigh is what you are and what you are worth?
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- 3. Change your definition of success. When you measure your success by what you eat, you can avoid deeper emotional issues. Spending time and energy focussing on what you eat, is time spent avoiding these emotions. Facing these emotions, and becoming aware of your internal dialogue that says you are a bad person if you don't weigh a certain amount, is a more helpful approach, and may help you get to the root of the problem rather than dealing with symptoms. Changing the internal dialogue can lead to changes in your life and functioning.
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- 4. Let go of the control issues. What would happen if you did not focus on food so much and let go of the vigilance. People often go on a diet thinking it is because they don't want to eat as much, but actually they go on the diet for the control issues: control of the time the structure of the diet requires of them to spend.- spending all that time on the diet actually helps them avoid concentrating on their feelings. What you really want to control is how you feel about yourself. (PS. Dieting actually causes malnutrition and decreases the metabolic rate)



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*Dieting is like trying to put out a fire in one room only when the rest of the house is on fire. You need to put out fires in many areas in your life.*

*Addictions serve a need. It may be a basic emotional need such as self-worth. What are you not getting in life? What are you running from? What are you avoiding?*

*Are you afraid of success? Learn how to own positive feelings if this is a problem for you. Don't put off your happiness till tomorrow (or when I lose weight). Change the paradigm from Have-Do-Be to BE-DO-HAVE*

*Should you decide to enter therapy because of this challenge you have in life :  
Together we will follow a cognitive behavioural approach - this will be a real departure from the belief that to lose weight we must restrict our eating. Some of the things I will ask you to do may initially seem quite confusing -you might be eating in unusual patterns - dessert for breakfast or at the beginning of a meal- bear with it as this a professional educational program concentrating on learning new effective behaviours which take time to internalise and understand.*

Some of the behavioural changes we will help you towards may be things like:

- Aim to exercise 7 days a week. 30 mins. (15+15 OK)
- Functional exercise- hide the remote, walk, take stairs, bike, jump rope, do weeds, wash car, jog in place, dance
- Always wear comfortable clothing you feel and look good in
- Drink 8 glasses of water per day (preferably purified)
- Drink hot water in the eves especially when watching TV or at desk at work
- Bum on seat each time you take a bite or want to eat something
- Aim to have meals between 10am and 4:30pm daily (unless going out socially to have dinner)
- Eat something every 3 hrs and eat slowly- aim is to learn to eat regular meals not content
- Provided you have consumed 5 servings of different vegetables and 4 servings of fruit you do not need to limit the type of food you want to eat.
- Limit caffeine/tea to 3 cups per day
- Go to bed early so you won't get tempted to snack in the eves.
- Connect with at least one friend daily
- Do one fun thing daily
- Do deep breathing exercise 3 times daily
- Before eating ask yourself is it mouth hunger or stomach hunger or just thirst?
- Throw out the scales- if you have to weigh yourself no often than once per month
- Start gratitude journal
- Meditate

The rest will be serious navel gazing!



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### **And some further tips for your information.....**

**Cutting the carbs..** Cutting bread and other refined carbohydrates from your diet helps to rebalance your insulin levels. Insulin is a hormone that turns carbs (pastry, pasta, rice, potatoes) into energy. Eating too many foods high in carbohydrates can lead to insulin insensitivity-the pancreas floods the body with insulin and this encourages the storage of fat.

**Dull the sweet tooth...** Gymnema, an Ayurvedic herb, available from health food stores, can anaesthetize the taste buds for several hours and curb continual sweet cravings.

**Mouth hunger or stomach hunger...think before you eat.** What are you really hungry for? When we get stressed we are drawn to carbohydrates because they increase the brain chemical serotonin. This is a relaxing hormone that helps ease agitation and makes us feel good.

**Eat more fat...**The Omega-3 fatty acids in fish oils and flaxseed improve insulin levels and help make fat available to the body as fuel. These “good” oils also help to release a hormone called cholecystokinin from the stomach. This hormone acts as an appetite suppressant by telling the brain you are full.

**Go heavy on the hormones..**Stimulate the natural production of human growth hormone (HGH). After the age of 30, our natural production of HGH, made by the pituitary gland, decreases. Part of HGH’s role includes the metabolism of fat. Slow the decline, and even elevate it, with sleep, strength training, dietary protein and limited processed carbohydrates.

**Dump the diet...**When your body is deprived of sufficient protein or calories it lowers the metabolic rate and prevents fat release. It also reduces the number of energy burning powerhouses of bodily cells called the mitochondria. The result is rebound weight gain when normal eating resumes. Instead focus on your fun need.

**Be positive..** Make a small change and bigger changes will follow: have one alcohol free week a month, take a walk in your lunch hour, make sure you walk an hour on the weekends or enroll in a yoga course. Exercise helps to speed the metabolism, tone lean muscle, promote good posture, clear the mind and alleviate emotional distress. Find something you enjoy; with the right attitude it will unfold naturally.

**Metabolic stimulators...**Fennel has now been proven to reduce the appetite; chew a few seeds when you feel more-ish. Chilli boosts the rate at which you burn calories at rest. Bladderwrack, a shore dwelling seaweed, is a rich source of iodine, needed for the thyroid to stimulate the basal metabolic rate.

*“Our bodies are our gardens to which our wills are gardeners” W. Shakespeare*



**APS Psychologists: 'Good Thinking'**

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Ref. Nectar Australia  
Marha Beck on Weight Loss  
Dr Weil .com