

How to think like a thin person

Josie Carin, Naturopath
Naturopathy
josie@naturology.care
www.naturology.care

Challenge your thoughts

We often think that eating is out of our conscious control, but eating is not automatic - it is actually a result of a thought process, and sometimes these can be sabotaging thoughts.

We might think to ourselves that "It's OK to eat this because I'm tired, I'm sad, the food is free, no one is watching me, everyone else is eating it, I'm celebrating". Or these thoughts may be confidence sapping "I'm so weak, I might as well give up" or "I shouldn't have eaten that, I'll start again tomorrow".

ACTION

To successfully lose weight and keep it off, you need to challenge these thoughts. Make a list of the sabotaging thoughts you usually have and develop written responses in advance. Keep these responses with you and practice them over and over until they become automatic.

An example is "I deserve to eat this" reply with **"I deserve to feel good about myself, and that is a higher priority"**. This will help you to make the right decision for your health.

Forget Fairness

Many sabotaging thoughts revolve around fairness. We eat because we tell ourselves "It's not fair that I can't eat what I want like everyone else". But in order to develop a healthy attitude to food, we need to get over ideas of fairness, injustice and deprivation. It's important to learn that **"I can eat what I want when I want, or I can be thinner, but I can't have it both ways."**

Always eat sitting down



When you eat sitting down, you notice what you are eating, you eat mindfully and feel satisfied. When you eat standing up, whether at work or at a party or while cooking, you are not only less satisfied, but you tell yourself that it doesn't count. But it does count.

Also avoid eating while watching TV, reading or having an animated conversation.

Don't eat when you are feeling emotional

It is not unusual to eat when you feel sad, bored or angry. However it is better to target the emotions that you make you feel upset in the first place. Distract yourself by going for a walk, talking to a friend, busying yourself with work. Or really take the time to meditate on whatever it is that has triggered the emotion, and work through it. Food will only make you feel better momentarily, and when you finish eating, you will possibly feel even worse.

ACTION

When you are feeling emotional, wait 20 minutes until you feel calmer, and then you'll make healthier decisions about what to eat, and when.

Don't fear hunger

People who struggle with dieting think that hunger is bad, that they ought to eat whenever their stomach feels empty or they feel the urge, and that if they don't eat, their hunger will get worse and worse until they can't tolerate it any more.

Thin people are naturally able to differentiate between when they're truly hungry and when they have a desire to eat. They know that hunger is normal, that it's uncomfortable, that it comes and goes, and that, unless it is meal time, they shouldn't fix the problem of hunger by eating, they should just get involved with something else.

ACTION

Learn to tell the difference between hunger and the desire to eat so you can make better decisions about eating.

Give yourself credit

People think that "It doesn't matter if I eat that just this once", "I'll make up for it later", "It's only cookie crumbs, it's not many calories", but it does matter every single time. And it's not just the calories. More importantly, it's the habit. Each time you eat something you are not supposed to, you're building up your tendency to give in. And each time you refrain from eating the foods you are not supposed to, you're strengthening your self-control muscle.

You need to develop faith in your ability to resist temptation, to make good decisions about what to eat, and to return to normal eating if you stray. Give yourself credit, and say to yourself "I've already done this, and I can do it again".

Change for good

It is crucial to follow these rules to develop automatic thought patterns and new mental habits. You may think you can lose weight and then return to the way you ate before, but people who maintain a weight they are happy to do so because they've changed what they do and how they think about weight and eating.

These changes may be difficult in the beginning, but they get easier over time until they become automatic.

You will become so used to eating the way you do, you'll consider it the norm, and you won't be able to remember what it felt like to eat every time you had the urge.

More importantly, you won't want to.

