

## Building a Healthy Outlook Session 4:



Managing Head Hunger

Barriers/Causes of Head Hunger  
(Check all that apply)

- Emotions
- Personal stress
- Work stress
- Home environment
- Work environment
- Driving route
- Grocery stores
- Restaurants
- Physical pain
- Medication
- Fatigue/lack of energy
- Medical conditions
- Self-criticism
- Specific cravings
- Habits/routines
- Peer pressure
- Enablers
- Lack of structure
- Special events/celebrations
- Other:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_





Action steps I can take:

Change my environment/manage triggers:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Change my routine:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Choose alternative coping mechanisms:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Eat smart:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Action Plan

What step would I like to try first?

(Pick an option)

- \_\_\_\_\_

Make a positive action plan:

I will \_\_\_\_\_

When \_\_\_\_\_

Then I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_

Next I will \_\_\_\_\_

I will measure my progress by \_\_\_\_\_

Potential barriers \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I will handle them \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My Reward \_\_\_\_\_

What makes this important \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Plan ahead for special celebrations/events:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Practice mindfulness by:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Find support:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Increase physical activity:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Practice self-compassion:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Cheerlead:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## Strategies for Managing Head Hunger:

### Managing The Environment:

- Keep junk food out of the house
- Go out for treats rather than bring them home
- Hide the treats so they're out of sight
- Put reminders on the cupboards and statements/positive affirmations/reminders that will help you be mindful of your goals
- Ask loved ones or co-workers if they can buy treats that you don't like
- Change up your space so you're prompted to do other behaviors (l.e. keep running shoes by the door or clean off the treadmill)

### Changing Your Routine:

- Pick an activity in the evening that occupies your hands (l.e. puzzle, reading, knitting, game, etc.)
- Plan an activity outside of the home (l.e. going for a walk, meeting up with a friend, taking a class, volunteering)
- Try to limit screen time or amount of TV watched
- Go to bed earlier
- Take a bubble bath to unwind
- Have tea with family members and chat about their day
- Call and talk with friends
- Write an email or letter to friends
- Have a go-to procrastination list that you can work on when you're bored

## Alternative Coping Mechanisms:

- Journal or self-reflect/get curious:
  - Ask yourself what is causing the stress or underlying issue?
  - Is there anything you can do to help problem solve this issue?
  - What can you do to help take care of yourself through this difficult time?
- Take a bubble bath
- Connect with a friend
- Pray
- Make a gratitude list
- Try to find the silver lining in the adversity. Seek another perspective.
- Practice Meditation
- Connect with nature
- Read an encouraging novel
- Watch a funny show
- Do something nice for someone else
- Devote some time to working on what you can control (i.e. focus on making healthy lifestyle choices)
- Throw yourself a dance party
- Lip sync to your favourite song
- Read through old encouraging cards and notes
- Have a board of awesome.
- Do a hobby that you love.

## Ways to Eat Smart:

- Practice urge surfing
- Practice the 80:20 rule
- Stay hydrated

- Eat every 2-4 hours
- Try to have balanced meals
- Try to incorporate fruits and vegetables with your meals
- Have a substantial protein source (15-30g) and fiber source (5-10g) with each meal to help control your hunger.
- Measure out your portions
- Have healthier versions of treats on hand if you know you'll be tempted.
- Have a smaller portion of the food item that you're craving and eat it mindfully.
- Food journal
- If you know you're going through a stressful time, have some easy options available as a back-up (l.e. frozen meals, meal replacements)
- Ask for help from family members with managing meal prep.

### Planning Ahead for Special Events:

- Talk with friends and family in advance about your health goals and why this is important to you. Discuss ways they can help support you with this.
- Have an accountability partner if it helps
- Brainstorm the different barriers that will come at this event and try to problem solve them.
- Pick the restaurant or look up the menu ahead of time to make your food choice.
- Offer to bring a healthy entrée that you can eat.
- Plan your other meals so you can stay on track.
- Mindfully indulge and take 20min to eat your first portion before going back for seconds.

### Strategies for Practicing Mindfulness:

- Mindfulness Meditation (use apps; audio tapes or youtube)
- Listen to music
- Practice yoga
- Tai chi
- Keep a gratitude journal
- Journaling thoughts
- Being aware of and accepting your thoughts & emotions without judging yourself for them

### Find Support:

- Counselling
- Mental health resources or programs
- Connecting with friends or family
- Reaching out to your GP or other members of your healthcare team (I.e. RMT, chiropractor, trainer, physio)
- Coming to group
- Connecting with other support groups or communities of likeminded individuals
- Researching programs/resources or materials to help support you.
- Connect within your spiritual community
- Online support

### Increase Physical Activity:

- Start by setting small goals for moving more throughout your day.
  - Park farther away from the store
  - Spend less time sitting
  - Measure your steps

- House work
- Sit less at work
- Walk on your lunch breaks
- Add in some short stretch breaks
- Take the stairs if possible
- Plan activities that involve moving
- If you have been inactive for a long period of time speak to your GP and obtain medical clearance before starting an exercise program.
- If recovering from an old injury or dealing with postural problems you can start doing rehab exercises
- Participate in an exercise class at your local community center.
- Ask for a weight room orientation at your local community center
- Join a walking group
- Do laps of walking around the mall or at an indoor track
- Hiking or biking outside
- Participate in community events that get you moving (I.e. fundraisers, 5km walk/runs for charity)
- Play a recreational sport (I.e. badminton, ping pong, etc.)
- Try dancing at home

### Practicing Self Compassion:

- Try to be mindful of and not judge yourself for your behavior, thoughts, or feelings. Accept them without over-identifying with them.
- Journal your thoughts and get curious about them. Are you treating them as just thoughts or beliefs?

- Have a way to remind yourself that everyone struggles with adversity and dealing with their imperfections on some level:
  - Have a quote or encouraging statement to read
  - Connect and ask someone else about how they're doing. Sometimes this can be a great way to increase your perspective on suffering.
- Write yourself a letter speaking to yourself as you would a friend in the same situation.
- Do an activity that provides comfort and support to you (refer to self-care activities above)
- Allow yourself to hit the “reset” button.
- Find more resources on self-compassion at: <http://self-compassion.org/resources-2/>

### Ways to Cheerlead:

- Seek out encouraging information
- Limit your exposure to negative messaging
- Have a playlist of encouraging songs
- Be intentional about acknowledging the positive things you've accomplished → recognize your progress!
- Embrace your unique journey and try to refrain from comparing with others.
- Write down your negative statements about yourself and change them to being positive. Reframe the way you are looking at yourself and your situation.