



## MODULE SIX

# Take Charge of Your Weight



### How do I set myself up for success?

This module will discuss how thoughts, feelings, and behavior work together to help or hinder your weight-loss progress. Each plays an integral role in how you perceive weight management. First, it is important to be aware of your thoughts and feelings about weight loss, particularly those that might be getting in your way. Rethinking unhelpful thoughts can keep you in the right mindset for progress. Identifying feelings that may trigger eating can help prevent patterns of overeating. Practicing mindfulness and paying attention to how your thoughts and feelings affect your behavior is a crucial step to better weight management.

“Everything about the MOVE! Program seemed to work for me.

From day 1, realizing it is a ‘self-managed’ program clearly defined my own responsibility to succeed.”

– Bob, lost 40 pounds

*Every positive thought propels you in the right direction.*

### In This Module You Will:

1. Learn about the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behavior
2. Recognize unhelpful thoughts and how to rethink them
3. Describe how feelings (both physical and emotional) influence eating

# Progress Check-In



I met my previous healthy eating goal

I met my previous physical activity goal

*My weight today is \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.*

Reflect on how well you met your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

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What challenges did you encounter?

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What helped you address those challenges?

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## Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your weight-loss efforts this past week?

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better sleep       | <input type="checkbox"/> More energy        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fewer prescription medications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better check-up    | <input type="checkbox"/> Less joint pain    | <input type="checkbox"/> Better blood pressure control  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved memory    | <input type="checkbox"/> Better mood        | <input type="checkbox"/> Better blood sugar control     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes fit better | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved cooking   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stress relief      | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater confidence | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More endurance     | <input type="checkbox"/> More organized     | _____   |

# Raising Awareness

Thoughts, feelings (both physical and emotional), and behavior can influence each other. Feelings such as hunger, sadness, boredom, or fear can trigger eating behavior, and eating may result in different feelings like happiness, anger, frustration, or fullness. Understanding how your thoughts and feelings influence eating (and how eating influences your thoughts and feelings) is another step to reaching your weight management goals. Practicing *mindful awareness*, or *mindfulness*, is a way to do this. Mindfulness means being fully aware of what is going on within and around you without judgement.

Consider the examples below. In this situation, thoughts and feelings increased the urge to eat. Has something like this ever happened to you before? Have you noticed any other thoughts or feelings that influence your eating or physical activity?

## Situation: You didn't lose weight this week.

<p><b>Feelings</b></p>	<p><b>Thoughts</b></p>	<p><b>Behaviors</b></p>
<p>You feel deprived and frustrated.</p>		<p>You stop using your food and activity log.</p>

## Situation: You overate at dinner.

<p><b>Feelings</b></p>	<p><b>Thoughts</b></p>	<p><b>Behaviors</b></p>
<p>You feel discouraged.</p>		<p>You skip a meal the next day.</p>



**Teresa's Tips**

"Your *attitude* about weight loss is driven by your thoughts and emotions and is reflected in your behavior. A negative attitude can get in the way of achieving your weight-loss goals. To keep a positive attitude, keep unhelpful thoughts in check, set achievable goals, and reward yourself for achieving your goals. Be kind to yourself through the ups and downs of your weight management journey. A positive attitude will help you succeed!"

**Practicing Mindful Awareness**

When you have a desire or urge to eat, stop and pay attention to what you are thinking and feeling. Be sure to write down thoughts and feelings that you notice and what you do in response. The more you pay attention to these things and write them down, the easier it will be to find patterns. Being aware of patterns gives you the ability to change them - whether it's rethinking your thoughts, addressing your feelings, or choosing a different response.



This week, when you find yourself engaging in unhealthy eating, take out this chart and write down your feelings and thoughts and what you did. *Circle* any unhelpful thoughts and behaviors and think about what you could do differently next time.

<b>Situation</b> Day, time, what was going on?	<b>Feelings</b> What were you feeling?	<b>Thoughts</b> What were you thinking?	<b>Behaviors</b> What did you do?
Tuesday, after dinner, paying bills	Anxious, stressed	I'll feel better after a snack break.	Stopped for a snack break even though I wasn't hungry. Didn't finish paying bills.

# Conquering Unhelpful Thoughts

How you think about weight management can affect how successful you are. Some may think their emotional response is determined or caused by the situation. Really, it's how you interpret or think about different situations that creates your emotional reactions. Sometimes errors in thinking can lead to discouragement or negative feelings that may decrease control over eating. It is important to remember that a *thought* is just a *thought*—it isn't necessarily wrong or right, true or false. If you can rethink unhelpful thoughts, you'll have the confidence to make positive lifestyle changes.



## Recognizing Unhelpful Thoughts

Let's review some common mistakes in thinking and some alternative ways of thinking. Which of these thoughts have you had or do you think you might encounter? Recognizing unhelpful thoughts is the first step to changing them!

Type of Thought	Example	Rethink It
<b>All or Nothing</b>	I've blown the entire day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I had one slip at lunch but I can get back on track at dinner.</li> <li>I won't give up because of one slip.</li> </ul>
<b>Making Excuses</b>	I can't meet my eating goals because my wife keeps making cookies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can enjoy a cookie as long I don't overdo it.</li> <li>I will ask my wife to make something healthy instead.</li> </ul>
<b>Filtering Information</b>	I haven't stuck to my diet at all this week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I stuck to my diet four out of seven days.</li> <li>I have a plan for how to stay on track in the future.</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Labeling</b>	I'm the world's worst cook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My daughter liked the stir-fry I made last night.</li> <li>I'll keep learning more about cooking.</li> </ul>
<b>Comparing</b>	Teo has lost so much more weight than I have.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'm not going to give up.</li> <li>I'll ask Teo for some tips.</li> </ul>
<b>Assume the Worst</b>	I just know I'm going to get hurt. Then I won't be able to work out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'll take steps to work out safely.</li> <li>If I do get hurt, I'll find a different way to be active.</li> </ul>
<b>Overgeneralizing</b>	I'll never be able to lose weight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With hard work, I can lose weight.</li> <li>I have to be patient if the weight doesn't come off right away.</li> </ul>
<b>Imperatives</b>	I must eat everything on my plate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whatever I don't eat, I can save for leftovers.</li> </ul>



**Tom's Toolkit**

“When you catch yourself feeling bad (stressed, angry, hurt, anxious, scared, sad, etc.), use these simple steps to rethink your unhelpful thoughts.

1. Recognize your unhelpful thought—what were you thinking or telling yourself when you were feeling bad?
2. Question it—is it a realistic thought? Is there evidence that this thought is true?
3. Ask yourself—is it helpful to think this way?
4. Consider alternatives—are there other ways of thinking about this? Are there other things that could be true?”

**Rethinking Unhelpful Thoughts**

Now let's practice using the four steps to rethinking unhelpful thoughts. Write down two unhelpful thoughts from the *Practicing Mindful Awareness* activity. Work through the steps to rethink your unhelpful thought.

	Thought 1	Thought 2
<p><b>Step 1</b> Recognize your unhelpful thought—what were you thinking or telling yourself?</p>		
<p><b>Step 2</b> Question it—is this a realistic thought? Is there evidence that this thought is true?</p>		
<p><b>Step 3</b> Ask yourself—is it helpful to think this way?</p>		
<p><b>Step 4</b> Consider alternatives—what are other ways of thinking about this? Are there other things that could be true?</p>		



## Teresa's Tips

“Every behavior is a choice, and every choice has a consequence—you have control over what you do. Realizing every behavior is a choice empowers you to make more positive choices in the future!”

# Emotional Triggers

An important first step in making lifestyle changes is to understand your habits. How often do you eat more than you planned in each of these situations?

Use the 1-to-4 scale.

1 = Never, or Does not apply | 2 = Occasionally | 3 = Sometimes | 4 = Often

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> When happy           | <input type="checkbox"/> While drinking alcohol         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> While alone          | <input type="checkbox"/> While watching TV              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> When bored           | <input type="checkbox"/> While smoking cigarettes       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> When lonely          | <input type="checkbox"/> While doing housework          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At social gatherings | <input type="checkbox"/> When celebrating               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> When depressed       | <input type="checkbox"/> While on vacation              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> When nervous         | <input type="checkbox"/> While away from home           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> When frustrated      | <input type="checkbox"/> While talking on the phone     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> While working        | <input type="checkbox"/> At restaurants or dining halls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At the movies        | <input type="checkbox"/> While eating regular meals     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> While reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> While preparing meals          |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> After physical activity        |



“To future MOVE! participants, I say come with a proper mindset.

And I offer this incentive: at first, it won't be easy, but once you accept and implement the lifestyle changes that MOVE! offers, it will.”

– Lee, lost 32 pounds



## Teresa's Tips

“Are you eating out of hunger or habit? Sometimes situations, time of day, thoughts, or emotions can trigger us to eat. When you feel the urge to eat, think about whether you are *hungry* or are just trying to fill an urge. If it is just an urge to eat, find something to distract yourself for 15 minutes.”

## A Healthy Way of Coping

Be mindful of how your feelings affect your behavior. Some feelings can increase your urge to eat or be inactive. Consider instead what is causing your emotion and how you can respond to the feeling productively.

Write down your emotional triggers from the *Practicing Mindful Awareness* activity. Brainstorm ways in which you can respond to that emotion rather than eating. Healthy coping responses could include things like socializing with friends or family, being physically active, distracting yourself (watching TV, reading, working in the yard, etc.), and meditation and relaxation exercises.



Emotion	Coping Response

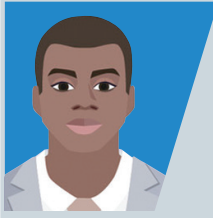
“I have now taken the MOVE! classes two times.

The first time, I was not mentally ready to make changes.

The second time I participated, I was focused on improving my health.”

– Joe, lost 50 pounds





## Smart Alex

“There is a link between negative emotions and unhealthy foods. When emotions are down, the craving for comfort food increases. Energy-dense foods are important for survival. However, as humans live longer and more sedentary lives, rates of overweight and obesity are growing. It is important to minimize the intake of energy-dense and processed foods for successful weight management, particularly when those foods are so widely available. Healthy eating is now a modern cultural necessity to live a long and healthy life.”

# Goal-Setting Check-Out

## Goals for Next Week

Set one new healthy eating and physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make it SMART (see Module 1).

### Healthy Eating:

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



### Physical Activity:

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

If you had trouble meeting your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Module Summary

## ***Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors***

It is important to understand how your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors influence each other to help or hinder your weight management progress. Practicing mindful awareness (being fully aware of what is going on within and around you without judgment) can provide insight into how your thoughts and feelings influence your behavior.

## ***Rethinking Unhelpful Thoughts***

Unhelpful thoughts can get in the way of successful weight control because they can lead to overeating or being inactive.

1. Recognize your unhelpful thought—what were you thinking or telling yourself when you were feeling bad?
2. Question it—is it a realistic thought? Is there evidence that this thought is true?
3. Ask yourself—is it helpful to think this way?
4. Consider alternatives—are there other ways of thinking about this? Are there other things that could be *true*?

## ***Emotional Triggers***

Emotions can trigger many people to eat. It is important to identify what your emotional triggers are so you can stop them in their tracks. Keep a diary of how you are feeling while you eat to identify your common emotional triggers. Consider healthy ways of reacting to the emotion other than food.

**Having a healthy mind is just as important as a healthy body.**

## **Module To-Do:**

1. Set two new weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.
2. Record in your *Food and Activity Log* every day.
3. Consider how your thoughts and emotions might be affecting your weight-loss behavior and how you can make them work for you—not against you.
4. Review Module 7 in preparation for your next meeting.