

Emotional Diet using Cognitive Behavior, Self-Hypnosis, NLP, EFT.

The Emotional Diet

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THE EMOTIONAL DIET

How to Love Your Life More and Food Less



BILL CASHELL

The Emotional Diet

**How to Love Your Life More
and Food Less**

Bill Cashell

Fountain Hill Publishing

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Chapter Four

Creating Change Now

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves”. ~Victor Frankl-

You already know that the key to directing your thoughts is having a clear picture of the results you want. If you created your blueprint for success and you focus on it every morning, your thoughts, feelings and actions will come in line with your desired outcome. Now we are going to focus on how you can change your thoughts and feelings to create new actions or new behavior.

Here is the basic model of cognitive behavior:

Thoughts = Feelings = Action = Results

Almost everything people do is a conditioned response, sometimes referred to as a habit. What we often call habits, especially when we talk about eating, are not really simple habits. For example, if you get up every morning and put on your right shoe first and then your left shoe, that is a habit. You don't think about it, you just do it the same way every time because it is a repeated behavior.

When you eat too much or eat the wrong kind of food, it is a response to the stimulus and how you have become conditioned to feel about that

particular food. This is much like Ivan Pavlov demonstrated with dogs. He fed them and rang a bell. After repeating this several times, they had associated the bell to food and began to salivate at the sound of the bell.

People do the same thing with their food. We create associations to feelings and when we see the food, we experience emotion like pleasure, and act just like the dogs. The way to create change is to alter the way we feel about the stimulus, or the feelings connected to the food.

There are many ways that you can create change in your thinking and your behavior. Now I am going to introduce several methods for changing your associations. All of these have been proven to work for the majority of people. If you use any one of these repeatedly, with feeling, you will be able to create the change you desire. I have never been a believer of the “one size fits all” approach. Try each of these and find out which ones work best for you. If you combine several of them together, you will create change even faster.

Change Your Focus

Whenever we evaluate something, it is usually based on what we will gain and what we will lose. With food, we look at it and think, “What will I gain if I eat this and what will I lose if I don’t?” Imagine someone brings a box of donuts into your work place or someplace where you gather. You look at the donuts and think, “If I eat one, I’ll have the pleasure of the taste. If I don’t have one now, there may not be any later”. You’ve just told yourself that you will gain something if you eat a donut and you will lose something if you don’t eat one. With a Win/Lose mind

set like this, you are probably going to eat the food every time. It becomes the scarcity mentality.

Now, reverse the options. Ask yourself, “What will I gain if you pass up the food and what will I lose if I eat it”? Imagine feeling heavy, sluggish and bloated if you eat the food. Then imagine feeling healthy, energized and full of vitality when you pass up the unhealthy food. Notice how good it feels to be in control instead of being controlled by food. Connect unpleasant feelings to eating the excess food, and connect good feelings to passing up the food.

Think of the Ingredients

Would you sit down with a big bowl of white flour and a spoon, and just eat it? That probably does not sound very appealing. How about sitting down to a big bowl of white processed sugar? For some people, that may sound better but still not very appealing. It also creates thoughts of rotting your teeth out. Let’s try one more. Would you sit down with a big can of Crisco shortening and a spoon and start eating? That sounds really repulsive, doesn’t it?

Let me ask you this – what if we mixed them all together and called them donuts? Aha – now you are getting a different picture, aren’t you? So the real question is, if you would not eat each of these ingredients alone, does it make sense to eat them together? I explained this to one client I worked with who loved donuts. She has not eaten another donut since then because now when she sees a donut, she mentally imagines that donut as a ring of solid Crisco. Her old association of pleasure has now

been replaced with the thought of how it would taste and feel to have solid Crisco in her mouth.

Think of some unhealthy foods that you have eaten to excess in the past. What are some ingredients that come to mind that you would not eat alone? Now, imagine that this food is filled with that ingredient (which it really is). Imagine how it would feel and taste to have a mouth full of that single ingredient. If you thought of shortening, imagine how it would taste and feel to have a mouthful of Crisco. It's not very appealing, is it? Repeat this three or four more times and you will probably find that this food is no longer as attractive as it was. You may even notice that it actually seems unattractive and you have lost some or all of your desire for it.

Bring the Future to the Present

Why is it so hard to pass up food when you know that you want to be trim and healthy? The reason is because you are torn between two desires. Part of you wants to be trim and healthy while part of you wants to eat that food that has given you pleasure in the past. The one that draws you the most is not necessarily the one that you feel is most important. Remember, we are not driven by logic, we are driven by emotion. In this case, the emotion you are feeling is desire. The desire that will usually win is the one that is the closest. Right now, the chocolate is sitting right in front of you, while your goal of being at a certain weight or size seems months in the future. That makes it so easy to say, "I'll start my diet tomorrow". Does that sound familiar?

Now, let's change the scenario. Remember the two doors right in front of you? The door on the left leads to the food you desire. The door on the right leads to the body you desire. The door you go through will give you what you desire right now. You can either have the food you desire or the body you desire just by going through one of these doors. Which one will you choose? I know you've heard this before. Do this every time you feel tempted until it becomes automatic.

At the end of the last chapter, you went on an imaginary journey into the future that took you to a choice of two paths. The path on the left leads to overeating, obesity and poor health. The path on the right leads to great health, vitality and a trim, healthy body.

Every day you take a step down one of these paths. The future is right now. Every time you look at food (especially the unhealthy food), bring a picture into your mind. On the left side, see the future of you looking heavy and feeling tired and sluggish. On the right, see the other you, looking trim and healthy, feeling so incredibly alive.

As you imagine both futures side by side, realize that your choice right now will take you one step into one of these futures. Keep both of them in front of you every time you think about food and exercise. Both of these futures are here right now. What you do today will affect you today. By seeing and feeling the pain of being heavy and at the same time, seeing and feeling the pleasure of looking and feeling great, you will bring the desire to be trim and healthy into the present moment. The brighter and closer you make it, the more it will affect you. Remember, the desire that is the closest is usually the most appealing.

Self-Talk - Your Words Drive Your Feelings

Do you talk to yourself? That's OK, we all do that. Unfortunately, most of what we say to ourselves is negative. Do you ever catch yourself saying things like, "That was really stupid", or "I can't believe I did that!" When you say something like that, your subconscious hears every word. After awhile you begin to believe what you have told yourself whether it is true or not. When you tell yourself, "I always eat too much", do you know what you are programming yourself to do? That's right! You're programming yourself to eat too much. Whatever behavior or feeling you tell yourself you have, you will create.

Now, let's look at the other side. Do you ever tell yourself how good you are? Try it right now. Think of something you have done well today. It may be as simple as driving a car or cleaning your home. Maybe you are a good parent or a good friend. Think back to the list of things you like about yourself. Now tell yourself how good you are at something or how proud you are of something you've done.

The first time you do this, it will probably seem strange. The more you do it, the better it will feel. You need to love and appreciate yourself. Catch yourself doing things right. Stop telling yourself what you are doing wrong and start telling yourself what you are doing right. Either way, you are reinforcing your behavior. Wouldn't it be better to reinforce the behavior you want?

Your Words Have Power

The words we use are so powerful and they influence how we live our lives. Research shows that our choice of words can manifest into our realities. When you talk, you create mental images with feelings attached. Most people are not even aware of the internal feelings that they are projecting when they talk. How many times have you ever said “something is killing me” or someone is a “pain in the neck” or some other part of the body. Imagine what kind of affect this has had on your body.

Notice the words you use talking to others. Notice the words in your head. What is the meaning of the words you use? For example:

“This job is killing me!”

“I am dead tired!”

Now consider what kinds of affects you could have on your body if you now begin to use words that promote health and healing. “I feel fantastic,” is just one example of the idiomatic expressions you may begin to use. That is my favorite phrase.

Have you ever noticed how people always ask, “How are you doing?” And then you answer with something like, “Not bad for a Monday”, or “I’m getting by”. Do you really want a life that is “just getting by”? If you want a fantastic life, answer that question by saying, “I am FANTASTIC!” You will notice a great deal of difference in how you feel by carefully choosing the specific word you use to convey a meaning.

Notice the difference in the feeling you get from the following words:

Enraged and Angry vs. Upset, Annoyed or Peeved

Depressed, Down and Sad vs. Blue or Occupied

Exhausted, Worn out, Pooped vs. Tired or Fatigued

Also notice the difference of the positive words you use:

Happy vs. Elated, Excited, Ecstatic

Good vs. Great, Fantastic, Incredible

Okay vs. Outstanding, Extraordinary, Exceptional

Consider the following statement that many people use when they are hungry – “I am famished!” Now, compare that to someone saying, “I am getting a bit hungry”. Both describe the same feeling – a desire for food. However, they create a different feeling and a different level of desire for the food. Which one is more likely to create a behavior that would drive you to overeat? You may be thinking, “What if I am really hungry? What if I am famished?” Think of the idea of a famine and ask if you have ever really suffered like that. Even if you are really hungry, you will tend to feel less like overeating if you mildly say that you are just a bit hungry. You create the feeling you want by the words you use.

Your phrases can also help determine your level of desire when you describe food. Have you ever heard someone say, “That dessert is to die for”? Would you get a different level of desire if the same person said, “That dessert is good”?

The words you say to yourself can also have a lot of power. Let me show you what I mean.

Right now, say this out loud with feeling – ***“I hate being fat!”*** How did it feel? For most people, it’s not very good. Hate is a very powerful emotion, and just using the word can bring feelings that are associated with it. When you say, “I hate being fat”, where are you directing those feelings? If you are like most people, you are directing them toward yourself.

Now, say this out loud with feeling - ***“I love being trim and healthy!”*** Did you feel the difference? Love is also a very powerful emotion. When you say this, you are associating this powerful emotion with the idea of being trim and healthy. You will never become trim and healthy with a mindset that says “I hate being fat”. When you focus on being fat, you create more of what you focus on. Your self-talk can direct your focus.

Here is an easy way to keep focused in the right direction. Several times throughout the day, just say out loud (or to yourself if you are in a crowd), “I love being trim and healthy”. When you say it, bring back the image of yourself as the person you intend to be. The more you repeat this exercise, the more it directs your subconscious mind to create the behavior that matches your image. By saying this with feeling, as you imagine yourself as the person you want to be, you engage multiple senses which will accelerate the changes.

Here is an exercise you can use in the morning when you first get up or when you go to bed at night. Go into the bathroom, look at yourself in the mirror and tell yourself how much you love yourself. Then, smile and tell yourself why you are proud of yourself. Get used to talking to yourself every day. You deserve to feel good about yourself, and you have so much to be proud of.

There are many words in the English language with emotional value. Why not begin to use the words that make you feel more ecstatic, more phenomenal, and more fantastic, so that you can live an exceptional life?

Here are a couple more phrases you might want to use:

Nothing tastes as good as being trim and healthy.

Nothing tastes as good as trim and healthy feels.

I love feeling good about myself and my body.

I love being trim and healthy.

Make your own signs that inspire you. Put them around your house or your work place. Put a screen saver on your computer. Put them everywhere you want to feel better.

Interrupt Your Automatic Conditioned Responses

I mentioned this earlier and it is worth repeating because it is very effective. Remember what happens if you put a rat in a maze with several dead ends? It will go down the first one until it finds a dead end. Then it will come back. What is interesting is that it will usually turn around and go back down the same path, even though there is no escape. The reason is because the rat knows how to get there and back and the path is familiar. The more it travels down that path, the more likely it is to repeat this pattern. After a few times down that path, the pattern becomes part of the rat's behavior. If you shock the rat while it goes down that path, it will

decide that this is not a good way to go anymore and will look for another way.

People often fall into self-perpetuating patterns of negative or destructive behavior. Interrupting that behavior pattern with a totally unexpected action can have lasting effects by erasing that pattern from that person's behavior while replacing it with a new, empowering pattern.

Recently, I worked with a woman who was suffering from panic attacks. I asked her to tell me, in detail about one of her recent attacks and relive the experience as much as possible. As she started describing the experience, she became visibly uncomfortable. Her palms started to sweat, her legs started to shake and her voice became very shaky. At that point, I reached over and squeezed her nose as I said, "Honk!"

She stopped instantly and looked back at me with a surprised look on her face. "I'm sorry", I said. "Sometimes I just get this uncontrollable urge to honk someone's nose. It's just so much fun that I can't help myself". What I had done was interrupted her conditioned response that caused her to panic when she remembered that experience. "Go ahead and finish your story", I said. "What?" she answered. "You were telling me about your experience", I replied. "Please go on".

It took her a minute to get back to the same point in the experience, but this time she was not as intense. As her intensity started to climb again, I reached over and honked her nose again. "What are you doing?" she asked with a smile. "I guess I just lost control again", I answered. "You just have such a great nose for honking".

That brought a smile from her as she said, "You are making it hard for me to concentrate on my experience". "OK", I answered, "I'll try to control myself". At this point she was no longer showing the signs of

panic and she was having a hard time connecting with the feelings of the experience. I asked her to continue and I could tell her response to the memory was changing. As she got back into the story, I playfully pretended like I was going to honk her nose again and she broke out laughing. I explained how the idea of honking her nose was creating a feeling of fun, which didn't match the feeling of panic from the experience. She decided that from now on, whenever she started to feel signs of panic she would just honk her nose and feel playful.

You can do the same thing if you have an urge to eat when you are not hungry. Realize that you are responding to the emotional condition that you are feeling at the time. The first step is to interrupt the conditioned response.

When you notice you are acting out of a habit (caught in the maze), stop and say to yourself, "STOP! That's not like me". You might even hold your hand up like a police officer would do to stop a car. Imagine a street sign with a picture of food and a circle with a line through it for "No Overeating". You could also do something pleasant like humming or singing your favorite song or get up and dance. You can even honk your nose, if you like. Just do anything that snaps you out of that automatic urge to reach for food. The more you do this, the more effective it becomes. By saying a phrase like "That's not like me" or "I'm in control now", you will begin to reprogram yourself with your own words.

When you notice you are acting out of a habit (caught in the maze), stop and say to yourself, "STOP! That's not like me".

Notice Your Feelings

One of the main reasons for overeating is because someone is feeling an emotional need. Almost everything we do is because we want to feel better. When you feel lonely, stressed or just a bit down, you know that certain foods will make you feel better. Unfortunately, that is just a temporary quick-fix.

So, what are feelings for and why do we have them? They really do have a purpose. Most people spend so much time trying to avoid or change their feelings that they never really stop to notice them and what their feelings are trying to tell them. Again, think of your feelings as you would think of the gauges on your car. When your oil light comes on, it is telling you that something is wrong. Putting more gas in the car will not fix the problem. It may take your mind off the oil light momentarily, but you are not addressing the real need.

When you try to suppress your feelings by putting more food in your body, you are also not addressing the real need. You are only reinforcing the habit of trying to suppress the feeling, but the real problem is still there. Instead of ignoring your real feelings, ask yourself what you are feeling. Be honest with yourself. You might even try asking as though you are your own best friend trying to help yourself feel better.

When you identify the feeling, identify the cause of that feeling. If you are feeling lonely, what is causing you to feel lonely? If you are angry, what are you really angry about? If you are sad, what is the cause of your sadness? Once you identify the feeling, you can deal with that instead of using food to try to change the way you feel. In a later chapter, you will

see how you can release the feelings that you are trying to tranquilize with food.

Write down the feelings you identify and any related causes that might have come up. If you are not sure where the feeling came from, just focus on the feeling and see if it comes up later.

Feeling	Cause
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Tracking Your Eating Habits

Now it is time to identify the feelings and places that trigger your desire to eat. Just raising your awareness can start to change your feelings.

For some people it may be a certain time of the day. For others it may be a place they associate with food or eating. You may find that a

particular emotion like frustration or loneliness will trigger a desire to eat. It may be that you just don't realize the times you have a little snack or the handful of French Fries that your child didn't finish.

One of the most effective ways of raising your awareness and creating change is to keep an eating diary. By tracking your eating, you avoid the mindless eating that can add on those extra pounds. One thing that a typical eating diary does not do is identify the feelings and emotions that trigger the desire to eat. If you have a desire to eat when you are not hungry, find out what emotional need you are filling with food.

You can download a printable copy of this eating record at <http://www.emotionaldiet.com/review.html>.

For a wrap-up of Chapter 4 go to <http://www.emotionaldiet.com/review.html>.

Eating Record

Day _____

Time / Place

Emotion / Cause

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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