



Session 11: Make Social Cues Work *for* You

What other people say or do may have a big impact on your eating and physical activity. **These are called social cues.**

Problem Social Cues:	Examples:
The sight of other people eating problem foods or being inactive.	
Being offered (or pressured to eat) problem foods or invited to do something that involves sitting for a long time.	
Being with peers who are rarely active.	
Being nagged.	
Hearing complaints.	

Helpful Social Cues:	Examples:
The sight of other people eating healthy foods or being active.	
Being offered healthy foods or invited to do something active.	
Being praised.	
Hearing compliments.	

When you respond to a social cue in the same way, you build a habit. The other person has *also* learned a habit. This makes social cues even harder to change than other cues.



To Change Problem Social Cues:

1. Stay away from the cue, if you can.

- Example: Move to a different room.

2. Change the cue, if you can.

- Discuss the problem with the other person.
- Brainstorm options.
- Tell the other person about GLB and your efforts to eat a healthier diet and be more active to lose weight and improve health.

Ask others to:

- Praise you for your efforts and
- Ignore your slips.

This is KEY to your success.

3. Practice responding in a healthier way.

- Say "No" to food offers.
- Show others you know they mean well.
- Suggest something they can do to help you.
- *Example:* "No, thanks. But I'd love a glass of ice water."

Remember, it takes time to change habits.



To Add Helpful Social Cues:

- Spend time with people who are active and make healthy food choices.
- Put yourself in places where people are active.
- Set up a regular “date” with others to be active.
- Ask your friends to call you to remind you to be active or to set up dates to be active.
- Bring a low-calorie food to share when you go to a party.
- When it’s appropriate, be the first to order when you eat out at a restaurant.
- Be social by doing something active. Take a walk and talk.
- What are some other social cues you might find helpful?



What Social Support Do You Need?

Research shows that people are better able to reach their eating and activity goals if they have some type of social support in place. What support do you need?

For healthy eating: _____

For being more active: _____

What could others do to help you? Here are some ideas. Check the ones that are important to you. You may need to teach your family and friends how to support your efforts.

Ways to help me eat healthy:	Ways to help me be more active
<input type="checkbox"/> Serve low-calorie foods for meals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Go for a walk with me. Or do other physical activities with me.
<input type="checkbox"/> Eat low-calorie foods when I'm nearby.	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan social events around being active.
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't tempt me with problem foods as a reward or gift.	<input type="checkbox"/> Compromise when my being active conflicts with your schedule.
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear the table and put food away as soon as the meal is over.	<input type="checkbox"/> Praise me when I do my scheduled activity. Don't remind me when I don't.
<input type="checkbox"/> Help with cooking, shopping, or cleaning up after meals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Do one extra household chore to allow time for me to take a walk.
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't offer me second helpings	<input type="checkbox"/> Set up a regular date with me to be active.
<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage me to cook or try new foods.	<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage me to go out for a walk when I'm debating whether or not to go.
<input type="checkbox"/> Praise my efforts to eat healthier foods.	<input type="checkbox"/> Try to achieve and maintain the GLB goals with me.
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:



Social Cues are Powerful at Social Events

Social events:

- Upset our routine.
- Challenge us with unique food and social cues.
- May involve habits that have developed over many years and so can be very powerful.

To handle social events, problem solve. Brainstorm your options.

Options:	Examples:
Plan Ahead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eat something before an event. ■ Plan your meal in advance. Budget your calories for the day. ■ Plan to eat the best (in small portions) and leave the rest. ■ Bring a tasty, low-calorie dish to share.
Stay Away from Problem Cues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stand as far away as you can from the table with the food. Keep your hands busy with a glass of water, coffee, tea, or calorie-free beverage. ■ Watch the alcohol. It lowers your willpower and increases appetite. ■ Clear the table as soon as possible. Put the food away.
Change Problem Cues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discuss your goals with your family, friends, guests, host or hostess. ■ Ask others to praise your efforts and ignore your slips.
Respond to Problem Cues in a Healthier Way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Practice a polite, but firm, "No, thank you." ■ Suggest something else they can do to help you.
Add Helpful Cues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Serve healthy foods or bring some to share. ■ Use low-calorie ingredients or cooking methods to lower the calories in favorite recipes. ■ Try some new, low-calorie recipes. ■ Ask a friend or family member for support (split dessert with you, take a walk together, offer you healthy food choices). ■ Plan things to do that are active and don't involve food.



Describe a Social Cue That's a Problem for You

Pick one idea from this session for changing that social cue. Choose one that is likely to work and that you can do.

Make a positive action plan.

I will: _____

When? _____

I will do this first: _____

Roadblocks that might come up

I will handle them by:

I will do this to make my success more likely: _____

How can I get the support I need? _____



Positive Social Cues You Would Like to Add

Pick one idea from this session for adding that social cue. Choose one that is likely to work and that you can do.

Make a positive action plan.

I will: _____

When? _____

I will do this first: _____

Roadblocks that might come up:

I will handle them by:

I will do this to make my success more likely:

How can I get the support I need?



To Do:

Check the boxes when you complete each item:

- Keep track of your weight.** Weigh yourself at home at least once a week. Record it.
- Record everything you eat and drink every day.** Come as close as you can to your calorie and fat gram goals.
- Record your minutes of physical activity.** Come as close as you can to the GLB goal of at least 150 minutes per week.

New things to practice:

- Try my two action plans for making social cues work for me.**

Answer these questions:

Did my action plans work?

If not, what went wrong?

What could I do differently next time?

- Add at least 250 steps per day.**

Last week, what was your average step count per day? _____

_____ plus 250 steps = _____

Average steps per day
(last week)

Daily step goal
(next week)

Session 11: Resources

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Getting Ready for the Holidays

Planning ahead is the key to staying active and eating healthy during the holidays.

1. Take time to think about potential problems in advance.
2. Write down the problem. List some possible solutions.
3. Choose the best strategy. Write it down.
4. Plan to reward yourself. Write down what you will do to earn the reward. Plan a non-food reward.

Ten Ways to Get Ready for the Holidays

1. Plan pleasures other than food or drink.
2. Hold a family conference well before the holidays.
 - Are we going to have tempting high-calorie foods in the house?
 - Get the family to agree not to nag you about what you eat or your activity plan.
 - Are there positive ways they can help?
 - What changes can be made to the holiday menus?
3. When you decide to eat a special high calorie food, choose quality, not quantity.
4. Plan ahead to be assertive with hosts. Let hosts know, in a clear and direct way, what you are planning to eat and not eat.
5. Eat something before you go to a party.
6. Decide what you want to do about alcohol. Alcohol increases appetite. It also lowers self-control. If you drink, are you aware of the calories involved?
7. Beware of fatigue, rushing, and tension. Look for early warning signals. Plan nonfood ways to cope, including exercise. Also, make plans to simplify.
8. Prepare for old friends or relatives you see only at holidays.
9. Plan for other pleasures *after* the holidays.
10. Make *reasonable* New Year's resolutions.





Staying Active on Holidays

For most of us, staying active on holidays isn't easy. Holidays upset our routine. They also challenge us with unique social cues. What's more, holidays may involve inactive habits that have developed over many years.

The key to staying active on holidays is planning.

Take a minute to think ahead about your next holiday.

- Where will you be?
- What might the weather be like?
- What days and times of the day will you have available for exercise?
- Are there nearby places to exercise?
- Who will you be with? Are they supportive of your being active?
- What kind of "holiday mind" thoughts might get in the way of staying active (e.g., I'm off from work now)?
- If you are traveling, what gear or clothing will you need to pack?
- How can you make staying active extra fun and festive?

I will: _____

When? _____

I will do this first: _____

Roadblocks that might come up:

I will handle them by:

I will do this to make my success more likely: _____



Lifestyle Balance on Vacation

Ways to Handle Vacations

1. Plan pleasures other than food or drink.

- Plan the kind of vacation *you* want.
- Think about what you like to do for physical activity. Can you make that a part of your vacation?

2. Hold a family meeting ahead of time.

- What did we like or dislike about our last vacation? What will we do this time? How will we handle food and eating out?
- Can we find a fun way to all be physically active this vacation? Get the family to agree not to nag you about your eating or activity. Talk about ways your family can help.

3. Have reasonable expectations for your vacation.

- Keep track of your eating and physical activity.
- Weigh yourself often. But remember, scales differ. Plan to *maintain* your weight.
- Let go a little. Eat something special. (Choose the best. Have a small portion.) Get extra activity.



4. If you tend to be tense on vacation:

- Avoid long periods when you're doing what others want and not what you want.
- Plan daily times to relax.
- Plan regular breaks while driving.

5. Decide what you want to do about alcohol.

- Alcohol may lower self-control. If you drink, be aware of the calories.

6. Balance rest with physical activity.

- Look for ways to be active that you enjoy.

7. Prepare for friends or relatives you haven't seen in a while.

8. Plan for pleasures *after* your vacation.



Lifestyle Balance on Vacation: Problem Solving

Healthy eating and being active *are* possible on vacation.
The key is to plan ahead:

1. What problems might come up?

2. Choose one problem. List some possible solutions.

3. Choose the best solution. What will you need to do to make that happen? How will you handle things that might get in the way?

4. Plan to reward yourself. What will the reward be? What will you need to do to earn that reward?





Staying Active on Vacation

Vacation means freedom from the demands of work and home life. So, it's easier to be active, right? Not always. The change of routine and surroundings can bring new challenges.

For most people, the key to staying active on vacation is **planning**.

Take a minute to think ahead about your next vacation.

- Where will you be?
- What might the weather be like?
- What days and times of the day will you have available for exercise?
- Are there nearby places to exercise?
- Who will you be with? Are they supportive of your being active?
- What kind of "vacation mind" thoughts might get in the way of staying active (e.g., I'm off now)?
- If you are traveling, what gear or clothing will you need to pack?
- How can you make staying active extra fun?

I will: _____

When? _____

I will do this first: _____

Roadblocks that might come up

I will handle them by:

I will do this to make my success more likely: _____
