

Overcoming Emotional Eating and Cravings with HALT and DEADS

Step 1: Exploration and Understanding

- Which HALT (Habit, Anger/Frustration, Loneliness/Boredom, Tired/Thirst) triggers are you experiencing?

- When does the eating happen?

- Where does it happen?

- Who are/were you with?

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☐ Step 2: Intervention Strategy

Which DEADS (Distract, Escape, Avoid, Delay, Substitute) strategy will you use?

Distract:

- Keep busy and/or focus on something non-food related.
- Examples: Knit, color therapy, play instrument, breathing techniques, quick exercises.

YOUR STRATEGIES _____

Escape:

- Leave the tempting situation and go to a different location.
- Examples: Move away from the food at a party, work in a room away from kitchen or pantry, go for a walk in the backyard or around the block.

YOUR STRATEGIES _____

Avoid:

- Avoid being in the tempting situation. If you do see it, you don't eat it!
- Examples: Don't drive past your favorite café, don't have trigger foods in the house, store trigger foods in a place that is not easily accessible to you.

YOUR STRATEGIES _____

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Delay:

- Wait at least 5 minutes and reconsider; wait additional 5 minutes.
- Examples: See Distract strategies.

YOUR STRATEGIES _____

Substitute:

- Substitute for a healthier choice.
- Examples: Crunchy vegetable sticks, non-trigger foods, tea, sparkling water.

YOUR STRATEGIES _____

References:

1. Melemis, Steven M. (2021). Relapse Prevention Plan and Early Warning Signs. Retrieved from <https://www.addictionsandrecovery.org/relapse-prevention.htm>.
2. SMART Recovery (2021). SMART Recovery Tool: Deny/Delay; Escape; Avoid/Accept/Attack; Distract; Substitute (DEADS). Retrieved from <http://www.smartrecovery.org/deads/>.