

FEEDING A FEELING

by Sorika de Swardt – Addiction Consultant



When did we become so obsessed with food? We spend evenings glued to the television watching another cook becoming a master chef whilst stuffing our faces with food that we hardly taste, because our minds are focussed on the meals dished up by celebrities on TV.

“Food addiction” is a very serious illness that needs expert treatment but simply being a comfort eater has its own drawbacks. We eat when we are bored, anxious, sad, stressed, tired, happy or cold. Many of us don't even know **how to tell the difference between physical hunger and emotional hunger.** According to the University of Texas:

- “Emotional hunger comes on suddenly; physical hunger occurs gradually.
- When you are eating to fill an emotional void you crave specific food, such as pizza or ice cream, and only that food will meet your need. When you eat in response to actual hunger you're open to options.
- Emotional hunger feels like it needs to be satisfied instantly whilst physical hunger can wait.
- If you're eating to satisfy an emotional need, you're more likely to keep eating even when you are full instead of stopping when you feel satisfied. Emotional eating can leave behind feelings of guilt whilst eating when you are physically hungry triggers no guilt.”

Is it just me or did food become the most overused antidepressant, and exercise the most underused stress reliever? Medical reasons for obesity set aside, 61% of people in South Africa are overweight, obese or morbidly obese because of the amounts and types of food we consume. Please do not ask me my weight, as I definitely contribute to the fact that South Africa is amongst

the top three countries for adult obesity and our children are the 5th heaviest in the world. We seem to eat more but we enjoy it less than before.

How do we find the off switch for a raging appetite and how do we restore control and mindfulness when we eat? Those in the know suggest that we learn to identify the relationship between our mood and our eating behaviour. Asking the support from a professional will be helpful, especially in the beginning. The therapeutic process will help you identify the trigger emotions, high risk times and high risk environments. Once the underlying reasons for comfort eating and overeating have been identified and attended to, it is vital to find more constructive mechanisms to deal with these emotions, events and environments. Some examples are: listening to music, gardening, reading, yoga or meditation.

A few new commitments may also help to maintain a sense of control, such as:

- Eating only in response to physical hunger and not in response to emotions.

→ continued on page 4



Sorika de Swardt

Binge Eating Disorder and Food Addiction

By Suzaan Klaassen – Therapist at Elim Clinic

Despite their best intentions, many people find themselves eating large amounts of unhealthy foods even though they know how harmful it is to them. Eating healthily and losing weight seems almost impossible for many people and scientists now believe that food addiction is a main contributor to obesity levels around the world.

What is Food Addiction?

Food addiction is a relatively new and controversial media term used for people who have lost control of how and what they eat in the same way drug addicts or alcoholics cannot stop drinking or using drugs. It involves the same areas in the brain (pleasure centres); the same neurotransmitters (dopamine) and many of the symptoms are also identical.

Food addiction is not an official term in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 5th Edition) but Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is a new addition to the DSM 5. The inclusion of this diagnosis bodes well for the possible inclusion of food addiction as a substance use disorder in the future. A large majority, of cases of food addiction fulfil all the characteristics of Binge Eating Disorder and “food addicts” in the late stages of addiction will display severe or extreme binge eating behaviours.

What is Binge Eating Disorder?

According to the DSM 5 the **warning signs for Binge Eating Disorder** are as follows:

Repeated episodes of binge eating an amount of food that is definitely larger than what most people would eat in the same amount of time under similar circumstances, and a feeling that one cannot stop eating or control what or how much one is eating.

If three of the following characteristics apply to you for longer than three months at a time, you may need to see a professional to discuss your relationship with food:

- Eating much more than normal.
- Eating until feeling uncomfortably full.
- Eating large amounts of food when not physically hungry.
- Eating alone or hiding food because of feeling embarrassed by how much one is eating.
- Feeling disgusted with oneself, depressed or very guilty afterwards.

For the purpose of this article we refer to Food Addiction as

→ continued on page 4

ADDICTION TO SUBSTANCES By Sorika de Swardt – Addiction Consultant at Elim Clinic

	Substance and street names	Route of administration	Reason for use	Signs of dependence or intoxication	Withdrawal symptoms when substance is not taken	Dangers with use
Depressants / Downers						
	Alcohol— (Ethyl) e.g. cider, whisky, gin, beer, brandy, vodka, liquor, wine. Juice, bevvvy, pop, booze, dop.	Swallowed - Alcohol is absorbed in the bloodstream and its effects depend on its strength of the drink and the individual's metabolism.	Relieves tension and eliminates worries from the conscious mind whilst under the influence. Makes user calm and relaxed or happy. Induces sleep.	Drowsiness, lack of concentration, impaired rational thinking, slow physical responses, impaired functioning in relationships, at school or work. Irresponsible management of money. Hiding alcohol from family and friends and lies about the amount used. Anger when asked or confronted about use.	Insomnia, depression, nervousness, twitching and shaking, aggression, physical pain and nausea.	Mental deterioration, lack of alertness, damage to organs such as liver, kidneys, brain etc. Blackouts, convulsions / fits, death (from overdose), severe physiological dependence. Severe depression. Associated with violence and aggression, road accidents, risky sexual behaviour and injuries due to disorientation.
	Inhalants / solvents. Industrial and household substances like benzene, petrol, acetone, hexane, nephtha, ruorocarbons, carbon tetrachloride, glue, turpentine, paint thinners, amylnitrite, isobutyl nitrite. Aunt poppie, poppers.	Inhaled or sniffed - Inhaled vapours are absorbed through the lungs and pass rapidly through the blood to the brain.	Light-headedness, drowsiness, numbness, weightlessness, vivid fantasies, dissociation. Out of body experience.	Fatigue, forgetfulness, tremors, thirst, inability to think logically or clearly, Feelings of persecution, irritability and hostility.	Chills, hallucinations, depression, anxiety, delirium, headaches, muscular cramps, abdominal pains, hostile outbursts, nausea.	Damage to central and peripheral nervous systems, kidneys, liver and mucous membrane of the respiratory tract, death due to asphyxiation, laryngospasm and heart attack.
Stimulants / Uppers						
	Cathinone (also known as cat) / methamphetamine (tik, meth) cocaine and crack (rock, coke, snow). Appetite suppressants containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. LSD, ecstasy, speed and amphetamines.	Stimulants can be swallowed, snorted, injected or smoked. Stimulants force the release of the body's own energy chemicals and stimulate the reward /pleasure centre of the brain.	Creates false confidence and causes excessive happiness. Very focussed and lots of energy. Suppresses appetite and keeps person alert and awake.	Pale face, involuntary movement and twitching, unnatural excitement, loss of appetite. Insomnia, rapid pulse, skin rash and overconfident behaviour. Aggression which is out of character for person. Heightened and risky sexual behaviour. Dilated pupils, hyperactivity.	Cramps in muscles, very low mood, depression, drowsiness and lethargy. Unnatural long periods of sleep. Irritability and aggression. Headaches and nausea.	High blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, damage to tissue of nasal passage if sniffed or snorted. Convulsions and death is possible after overdose. Crack is a smoking form of cocaine. Damage to throat, lungs and mouth when smoked. Infections and injuries when crashed and injected. Severe and unhealthy / dangerous weight loss. Severe depression and possibility of anxiety and paranoia.
Hallucinogens						
	Dagga - cannabis, grass, joint, boom, zol, dope, skyf, weed, hash, poison, chronic, bhang, black, blast, blow, blunts, bob hope, bush, drop, draw, ganja, hashish, hemp, herb, marijuana, pot, puff, lights, resin, sensi, sensemilla, skunk, smoke, backy, zero. Some names are based on where it comes from: Afghan; home-grown; Moroccan; Durban Poison; etc.	Cannabis can be smoked, chewed or made into a tea.	Relaxation, alleviation of anxiety, feeling of well-being and euphoria. Feels more creative.	Bloodshot eyes, drooping eyelids, unnatural thirst or hunger (munchies), uncontrolled moods, overly talkative under influence, disturbance of judgement, giggling, impaired perception of depth and distance (distortion of reality).	In some users - restlessness, aggression, insomnia, moodiness, lack of self-control, lethargy, irritability, nausea, decreased appetite, headaches and low mood. Low motivation and low energy levels.	Accidents due to distorted perception, Excessive aggression when combined with alcohol in some people. Anxiety , psychosis, physical damage in form of bronchial irritation, risk of lung cancer, chromosome damage, interference with ovulation. Possible onset of psychotic illness like schizophrenia.
Opioids / Narcotics						
	Opium. (0's, oupa). Heroin (smack, horse, brown), morphine (morph, miss emma, krokodil). Codeine, pethadine (peths), Wellconal (pinks, welks). When mixed with dagga and ARV's it is called Nyaope or Whoonga.	Some users will snort or sniff heroin powder. Smoking heroin on foil is a popular method - called chasing the dragon. Diverted pharmaceutical tablets may be swallowed or crushed and injected. Heroin can be injected in muscles, veins or just under the skin (known as skin popping).	Powerful pain killer. Creates an intense feeling of warmth, happiness and wellbeing. Euphoria.	Small constricted pupils, injection marks and bruises on arms, thighs, groin, neck and ankles. Unnatural calmness, drowsiness and personality changes when craving. Decreased appetite and low sexual drive.	Sleeplessness, nervousness, anxiety, intense physical pain, aggression, hot and cold flushes, running nose and cramps in muscles, severe vomiting and abdominal pains, twitching and jerkiness.	Mental deterioration, impotence, sterility, physical deterioration, weight loss, loss of interest in life in general, convulsions, coma and death from overdose, severe physiological dependence. Severe changes in brain chemistry and function.
Hypnotics - sleeping tablets and Tranquillisers - calming tablets						
	Sleeping tablets and calming tablets to relieve anxiety. Barbiturates (barbs, downers, blues, yellows, red devices, red birds, bows, vees - Mandrax (mandies, buttons. whites), Diazepam (valium, vax, doval), Oxazepam (serepax and purata), Lorazepam (ativan, tranqil, tranqipam), Nitrazepam (mogadon, lyladomi noctene).	Diverted pharmaceutical tablets may be swallowed or crushed and injected or mixed with tobacco or dagga and smoked.	Relieves insomnia and eliminates worries from the conscious mind whilst under the influence. Reduce anxiety, panic and fear.	Drowsiness, lack of concentration, slow thinking and reactions. Feeling like you have a hangover. Faulty judgement and emotional Instability. Low mood.	Insomnia, nervousness, anxiety, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, hallucinations, seizures (fits) and low mood.	Could lead to mental sluggishness, lack of alertness. Coma and death from overdose. Respiratory and circulatory collapse. Severe physiological dependence. Depression and suicidal ideas may occur. Weight gain.

In Memoriam

By Adrie Dreyer – Clinical Manager



Thea Kruger

On 11 March 2014 we lost a dear and respected colleague. Thea Kruger was part of the Elim team since 2007. We remember her loyalty, kindness and patience. A true juggler she was, balancing many demands at work with a full and creative private life. Thea managed to stay in every moment, always making time to help a colleague, attending to her own work later. Her love for the Lord reflected in her long-standing relationship with her church, and her love for her family was visible in her everyday life.

Thea, we mourn your departure... we miss you dearly... we celebrate your life!

Continued Professional Development

Elim Clinic offers good quality, affordable CPD training events. All our events are registered with the HPCSA and the SACSSP.

For more information on the workshops and seminars we have available, please visit our website on www.elimclin.co.za

Feeding a feeling

→ continued from page 1

- No eating after 19:00 and no second portions.
- Plan your meals – If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.
- Snack on fresh fruits and vegetables and small portions of proteins.
- Look at recommended serving sizes on the food containers and stick to that.
- Eating more regularly but smaller portions to keep blood sugar levels stable.
- Eating fresh and unprocessed foods often and treats only on special occasions.
- Limit sugar, salt and fat intake, and stay away from artificial sweeteners.
- Most importantly, learn to eat mindfully – whilst you actually look at your food, focus on what you taste and savour every moment instead of force-feeding yourself whilst staring at some or other screen.

Maybe next time, before I order that huge piece of cheesecake, I will ask myself - "what is it that I really need" Quite often what we are looking for cannot be found in heaps of food or the corners of the fridge. Good luck my fellow munchers.



Elim Clinic's logo under construction

Maybe you spotted it already?

Elim Clinic has a new logo. We are constantly striving to improve, update and modernise our services and treatment programmes, so we thought it was a good time to give our logo a facelift. We kept the best of the previous logo as a basis to depart from.

Elim Clinic's logo symbolises a jubilant person reaching out in victory to a higher level of functioning. The circle illustrates physical, psychological, social and spiritual growth and development, as well as a state of harmony. It portrays a position of victory despite difficult circumstances. It gives gestalt to grace and to mercy, to the concept that one can soar like an eagle and not remain shackled by the chains of negativism. It gives the children of God their rightful position, one from which they can remain victorious in the face of adversity.

The new logo, in use from 1 April 2014, adds the light – the symbol of hope. It also states clearly what the Clinic is about: Professional treatment centre for addiction.

The previous pay-off line "Putting you in charge" is synonymous with personal mastery, and is incorporated in the treatment philosophy.

Elize Smith - Managing Director

Binge Eating Disorder and Food Addiction

→ continued from page 1

an extreme form of Binge Eating Disorder with added characteristics of substance use disorders.

How Food Addiction Works

Scientific studies show that certain foods affect our brains in the same way as alcohol, nicotine, heroin and cocaine do. When we eat these foods it causes an intense dopamine release which hijacks the biochemistry of the brain, causing a feeling of pleasure. Once people experience pleasure associated with increased dopamine transmission in the brain's reward pathway, they quickly feel the need to eat again.

The reward signals from pleasant foods may override signals of fullness and satisfaction. As a result, people keep eating, even when they're not hungry. These foods also offer a short term relief for feelings of depressions, anxiety and stress.

Over time the brain needs more of these foods to maintain short-term relief from stressful emotions, pain, anxiety or depression and to keep food cravings at bay. Pleasure receptors become less sensitive and the phenomenon known as "tolerance" occurs. As tolerance increases, the familiar sense of well-being requires higher doses of the addictive foods. Major blood-sugar fluctuations occur as the body begins to depend on refined carbohydrates and processed foods. High blood-sugar levels produce short-term bursts of energy but when the blood-sugar drops, symptoms of fatigue, lethargy, headaches and irritability follow. These are very similar to withdrawal symptoms from other substances. High- and low blood-sugar thus helps to drive the cycle of addiction. Just like the drug addict, they eat more but it satisfies them less. In the end, the food addict eats to manage cravings and withdrawal symptoms, rather than eating for health or pleasure.

The Guilty Foods

The more refined or processed foods are, the more habit-forming they can be. The foods that are often associated with food addiction and binge eating are as follows:

- Highly processed foods such as sugars and flours.
- Processed junk foods.
- GMO corn (Genetically Modified Organics) and soy.
- Certain foods also have morphine-like effects on the brain. Dairy contains caseomorphins and wheat and other gluten grains contain gliucomorphins.
- Flavour-enhancers, artificial food colouring, additives and sweet, floury, milky foods can impact brain chemistry, leading to cravings and driving the compulsion to overeat.
- Fructose also stimulates insulin syntheses but does not release it. This can contribute to increased body weight.

Recovery from food addiction

Recovery from food addiction is as complex as the addiction itself. Individuals can become addicted for a combination of reasons including emotional, social, genetic and neurochemical. The possibility of medical problems that might contribute to a person's overeating must first be established, followed by investigation of neurological, psycho-social and emotional factors. The good news is that like with any other addiction, there is always hope. With professional help and expert advice, a food addict can learn to enjoy food without the consequent shame and loss of control. Food is medicine! Fresh whole foods have the power to balance your brain chemistry and have the power to life-giving energy.

RESOURCES

- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 5th Edition)
- Foodaddictionresearch.org
- Rebecca Cooper, *Rebecca's House Eating Disorders Treatment, 2012*
- *Binge Eating Disorder Health Centre (WebMD Medical Reference)*
- Rick Warren, Daniel Amen, Mark Hyman, "The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a healthier Life", (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 102-104.
- <http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/mental-health-food-addiction>



Suzaan Klaassen

Donations

We thank you for your continued support

- Mr Lionel Gosling from Protea Pharmacy
- Ms Tebello Polisanne from Emperors Palace
- Mr N Naidu from Air Products
- Mrs Cheryl Oelofse from Keybase Training Solutions