

# Vicious Eating

The Food Addict's Guide to Redemption

by *Kris Gunnars*

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## **Disclaimer:**

I am not a doctor and this manual is not intended to provide medical advice or to take the place of medical advice and treatment from your personal physician.

Readers are advised to consult their own doctors or other qualified health professionals regarding the treatment of medical conditions.

The author will not be held liable or responsible for any misunderstanding or misuse of the information contained in this manual or for any loss, damage, or injury caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by any treatment, action, or application of any food, food source or supplement discussed in this manual.

The statements in this book have not been evaluated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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## About The Author

I’m Kris. Kris Gunnars.

Actually... that’s just my pen name. My real name is Kristjan Mar Gunnarsson, but most of my readers are from English speaking countries and Kris is easier to pronounce.

It sounds just like „Chris“ but is spelled with a „K.“

I was born and raised in Iceland, an island in the North Atlantic. Great country... cold climate, windy and the occasional volcanic eruption.

The summers here are incredible though.

At the time of this writing, I’m 26 years old.



The reason I've written this book is that I had severe problems with unhealthy foods myself.

Despite having a lot of knowledge on the subject of healthy nutrition, I found myself craving and bingeing on junk food... all the time.

As a recovering alcoholic and drug addict, I realized that my unhealthy relationship with food felt exactly the same as addiction to drugs of abuse.

It's a different substance and the social consequences aren't the same, but the cravings, the thought processes, etc. are identical.

Despite not having a degree in anything, I do have some knowledge of these subjects.

I'm a med student, personal trainer and a science geek who has read dozens of diet books, hundreds of scientific studies and thousands of blog articles.

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## **About The Book**

If there are some technical terms that you don't understand, try googling them.

If you can't find your answer, send me a message on Facebook or Twitter and I'll see what I can do.

# Why is This Book Published in E-book Format?

There's a simple reason for that. It is totally unrealistic for me to write a printed book that would actually get published outside of my very small country, Iceland.

For that to happen, I'd need to be either rich or famous (I am neither).

Anyone that has a message to bring can publish an e-book.

Plus it's better for the environment, if you care about that sort of stuff. Not a single tree was slaughtered to make this book a reality.

## How to Use This Book

I structured the book to be read from start to finish. Every single chapter is directly relevant to the purpose of the book.

To prevent any confusion, in this book I will refer to "food addiction" a lot. This may not be the term you choose to describe your own problem, but it is the term I find to be the most accurate.

You can call it whatever you want:

- Binge eating.
- Compulsive overeating.
- Conditioned hypereating.
- Unhealthy „relationship“ with food.

They're all different sides of the same coin, so to speak.

Another thing... the word I use to describe our problem foods include:

- Junk foods



- Problem foods
- Addictive foods
- Hyper-rewarding foods

Whenever I use any of these terms, that I am always talking about the same thing.

The foods we have problems with aren't always the same between individuals... but they are usually highly processed and contain either sugar or white flour, or both.

You may not have problems with the exact same foods as I do, it differs between individuals. I will cover this in detail later.

I will link to various resources and YouTube videos throughout the book. None of the videos are mine, but they really do add value and can be a nice break when you've finished reading many pages of text.

I do **highly recommend** that you watch them. These are videos that I have personally found to be extremely motivating and informative.

## This is NOT a Diet Book

Most diet plans are terribly unsuccessful, with the failure rate being as high as 80% for maintaining a weight loss of 10% for one year ([1](#)).

Many people have a long history of yo-yo dieting before they finally manage to stick to a diet in the long run.

It's not the problem that *diets* don't work.

Most of them do, but the inability to stick to them in the long run is the reason they fail.



We all know someone who has lost a ton of weight and lived happily ever after on some type of diet... but for each person who succeeds, many more fail.

If you adopt the ideas presented in this book, you should finally be able to stick to a „diet“ as long as you want.

Actually, chances are that you will never have to go on a diet or count a single calorie again as long as you manage to break the vicious eating cycle that drives overeating.

Just keep in mind that this is NOT a diet book.

This book is NOT about how to lose weight. I actually recommend that you put weight loss on hold for 1-3 months while you overcome your addiction to hyper-rewarding foods.

There is no portion control, calorie counting, tricks like using smaller plates or drinking more water, nothing like that. The only thing you have to do is **avoid certain addictive foods**.

Avoiding these foods causes an automatic decrease in appetite, so you will probably start eating less overall calories and lose weight without even trying.

Weight loss is a **welcome side effect** of avoiding these addictive, appetite stimulating foods. Then there are all the other incredible benefits of improved metabolic health, both physical and mental.

## **Any Comments or Suggestions?**

If you have ANY:

- Comments about something in the book.
- You think something is irrelevant.
- You think I'm missing something that IS relevant.

- You feel that something can be worded or explained better.
- That there are factual errors anywhere...

Then shoot me a message on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) and I will see what I can do. I would LOVE to get your feedback so that I can improve this book even further.

# Introduction

One bright and cold afternoon in Reykjavik, Iceland, a man was sitting in his car outside a convenience store.

It was early October in 2011. He sat there, car parked in the parking lot, watching the people walk in and out.

If you had seen him sitting there, you probably wouldn't have noticed anything strange. A normal guy in his twenties, sitting in his car.

You might have wondered what he was doing, then perhaps assumed that he was waiting for someone to come out of the store.

But no, he was alone, and despite the calm look on his face, he was experiencing severe emotional turmoil. He was thinking really hard whether he should go inside or not.

You see... inside the store, they sold ice cream and candy bars.

What was really going on inside this man's head was an internal battle about whether he should go in there to buy a bunch of junk food so that he could drive somewhere and eat it alone in his car.

There were two forces at play in his mind. One of those forces was a strong, compulsive craving to go in, buy massive amounts of junk food and then binge on it until he felt sick.

A really strange desire, perhaps even ridiculous to people who haven't experienced it, but it was nothing this man hadn't experienced multiple times before.

The other force was trying to fight this urge, the force that some people recognize as willpower.

He had decided a few days before that he wasn't going to do this anymore. He was gaining weight and he knew that he would feel guilty and disgusted with himself if he gave in to the craving. He always did.

His desire for these foods didn't make much sense. He wasn't really hungry, he had eaten a nutritious meal a couple hours before and he was already overweight.

But there was something in his mind that kept this relentless, obsessive urge going strong, something other than actual hunger.

Despite him trying to stop thinking about the craving, knowing very well that it was in his best interest not to eat these foods, he just couldn't stop. His mind wouldn't let it.

After a few minutes of agony, his willpower caved and he went into the store, bought ice cream and a bunch of candy bars, then drove to some private spot and ate all of it in one sitting.

He continued eating until he had finished what he purchased, totalling about 5.000 calories in one sitting... two days worth of calories for a grown man.

Afterwards he drove home with feelings of guilt that lasted until the next day. He told himself *"that's it - no more of this!"* and made a firm decision never to do it again.

However, the exact same cravings, thought processes and justifications drove him to repeat this peculiar act again... only two days later.

Just like before, guilt and self-disgust followed and the decision to never do it again... and that's how it went on for a while.

## **This is How I Used to be**

This was a description of one of my afternoons in 2011.

During my worst periods of binge eating, I would do this several times a week, almost every day.

The cravings would start at some point during the day, sometimes in the morning, sometimes the afternoon and sometimes after dinner.

I would fight the cravings for a while, then lose the "internal battle," binge on junk foods, feel guilty and decide never to do it again.

A vicious eating cycle that I didn't seem to have any control over.

I tried fighting it with willpower...

I looked everywhere online for a solution...

I tried various supplements and appetite suppression tricks...

I talked to a psychologist about it...

I saw a psychiatrist who prescribed a drug, which didn't work...

I went to a 12-step group called Greysheeters Anonymous, which is kind of like a hardcore version of Overeaters Anonymous, tried that for a while and then one day relapsed and started binge eating again.

Basically, nothing worked.

On several occasions I managed to stay away from junk foods for a few weeks, lose a decent amount of weight and start feeling like myself again.

Then one day a craving would show up, I'd give in and then binge until I had gained all the weight back and ruined what little self-esteem I had gained since the last binge.

This is how it went for me, over and over again.

The weight gain wasn't the worst part for me though, "losing" all the time was. Feeling like a failure, like a loser, feeling weak, feeling out of control... this really poisoned other aspects of my life and ruined my self-esteem in every way imaginable.

Not only was the vicious eating cycle ruining my body, it was ruining my mental health and wellbeing as well.

Until I found a solution, which is really what this book is about.

I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not someone you would categorize as "weak minded" or "lazy." I am not a glutton or a sloth. I consider myself to have a pretty strong willpower.

I've been successful in many other aspects of my life, breaking free of various other addictions. I've done very well in every job that I've had and I made it to med school and get decent grades there.

Since becoming aware of my problem, I've spoken to many people who have experienced similar things.

Many of them are highly successful in their lives, but when it comes to the power of these addictive foods they become as weak as I was.

Food addiction is not caused by a lack of willpower. People who don't have this problem will not understand that and will continue to say that weight loss is all about willpower, self-discipline and calories in, calories out, moderation and all that.

You will meet hundreds of these people in your lifetime. Don't let them frustrate you, they simply do not understand your issues.

Your issues may not be quite as bad as mine were and that's perfectly okay. My personality is as addictive as it gets and I realize that many people reading this may not have problems as severe as I did.

But... if you *are* reading this, then you probably have at least *some* problems with the addictive foods.

Food addiction, as I choose to call it, isn't an on-or-off condition. There's an entire spectrum.

Some people, like myself, are completely out of control and need to take drastic action to prevent a lifetime of unhappiness, weight gain and disease.

Others just need a little guidance. Perhaps some explanations of the problem and some little adjustments they can make. A few more weapons in the arsenal to fight the urges.

## Food Addiction Makes Weight Loss Impossible

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that trying to lose weight while having these urges is next to impossible.

You may be able to lose a few pounds, feel better about yourself, then give in to a craving and eat the pounds back on you... and then some.

It is called yo-yo dieting and is extremely common.

When I finally gained control over my eating habits, I started feeling in control in other aspects of my life.



I lost a lot of weight and started literally *wanting* to go to the gym to work out. I felt better in every way imaginable.

What I want you to do, at least for the first month, is to *postpone* weight loss as a primary goal.

For some, losing weight is extremely important, but breaking the vicious eating cycle is a monumental challenge on its own.

If you add hunger to the mix you will make it harder.

Trust me, chances are that you will lose a lot of weight without trying if you manage to avoid the addictive foods.

These foods stimulate appetite and override the brain's natural mechanisms that are supposed to prevent you from getting fat.

Avoid these foods and you will probably start to eat less automatically.

I lost 15 pounds myself, in a short amount of time, simply by not bingeing on crap (in my case, crap being processed foods that contain either sugar or gluten).

After that, I started "dieting" and managed to lose another 15 pounds to reach a healthy, lean body weight and a body fat percentage in the "fitness" range.

After I had gotten rid of my addiction to sugar and gluten, losing weight was **effortless**.

Hunger was almost nonexistent and I didn't crave junk foods at all.

I'm sure that for a lot of people, bingeing IS the problem making them gain weight. Some people can lose ALL their excess weight without ever counting a single calorie as long as they stop eating the addictive foods.



# Weight Loss Success Rates Are Abysmal

As obesity rates have reached epidemic proportions in the past few decades, an entire industry has been built around it.

Many clever marketers have caught on to this, each one of them wanting a piece of the pie (and “weight loss” is a BIG pie).

Some of these marketers are honest, others will do anything for a quick buck. Therefore, it is important to be wary of scams and quick fixes.

In order for the marketers to be able to sell their products, they need unique angles on things, to set themselves apart.

This is one of the reasons you will find such an immense, confusing tangle of solutions out there that are all supposed to work according to the people that are selling them.

You will find low fat diets, low protein diets, diets that only allow animal foods, diets that eschew animal foods, diets where you eat nothing but bananas, etc. The list goes on and on and on.

Although some of these solutions are absolutely ridiculous, many of them actually work if they are really followed as prescribed. Some of them even have real evidence behind them.

This is why you will find genuine success stories for various different diet programs. Atkins, Weight Watchers, vegan diets, random pills... they all work, for *some people*.

But for each success story, there will be many more who failed, but these people usually don't make it to the sales pages and infomercials for obvious reasons.

The truth is, weight loss success rates are abysmal by all standards.

The failure rate is as high as 80-95% and this applies to ALL weight loss methods.

But why?

Why are diets so hard to stick to and why is the failure rate so high?

Why can't people just make a decision and stick to it?

Well, obviously I believe food addiction to be a large part of the problem, especially for people who have a history of yo-yo dieting and problems with cravings.

But another very important thing is that humans aren't robots.

Eating isn't a fully conscious behaviour, there is a LOT going on in our brains and our environment that ultimately affects when, what and how much we eat.

It is a primitive urge and the brain centers that control eating behaviour can not be easily dominated by the brain centers that control logic and reason.

People don't overeat because they make a logical decision to gain weight and become obese. No one wants that.

There is complex physiology and biochemistry at play that scientist are just beginning to grasp.

The brain, gram by gram, is the most complex object in the universe. Our brains interpret various signals, both internal and external, that influence our behaviour. This applies to eating behaviour as well.

Logic and reason can not always overpower behavioral drives. This is why smokers can't simply quit and why alcoholics can't just drink in moderation.

The exact same applies to people who crave junk foods and are unable to control themselves around them.

These foods affect the **exact same areas in the brain** as drugs of abuse and trying to exert willpower can be just as hopeless for the food addict as it is for the alcoholic. It simply **does not work**.

The weight loss industry doesn't understand this. Most doctors and dietitians don't understand this either. They think that it is a simple matter of calories in, calories out and a bit of willpower.

The people and professionals who share these opinions have not experienced these difficulties for themselves. They simply do not understand why people can't just "eat less and move more."

For certain people, including myself, such simplistic solutions are unrealistic and downright impossible.

To compound the problem even further, most of the people who have this problem don't realize it either.

They start thinking they're too weak, too greedy or just to go into denial about the problem altogether. This ruins their self esteem and makes things even worse.

No, for people like me (and perhaps yourself), simply applying willpower or eating „in moderation“ just does not and will not work.

# Part 1 – Defining The Problem

Before we can overcome this problem, we must recognize it. We have to know what we're dealing with in order to be able to beat it.

This chapter will explain in detail what it means to be a food addict, what cues and cravings really are and how the addictive foods affect the brain.

# Confessions of a Food Addict

*[This is a direct copy-paste of a blog post I wrote in September 2012, when I had finally made the decision to overcome my food addiction.*

*I have not touched sugar or gluten since.*

*After all the positive feedback I got after writing it, I decided that this book was something that needed to exist.]*

This article is going to be different from what you're used to seeing here.

Instead of tackling a certain topic, exploring a myth or posting someones success story, I am going to talk about myself.

I am going to be making a few confessions...

Some of these are personal and involve things that I am embarrassed about.

Writing this certainly hasn't been easy, but it feels good to get these things off of my chest and I think it will eventually lead to the greater good.

## My Interest in Nutrition

There are few things in life I've been as enthusiastic about as nutrition.

Even though I don't like the way it tends to be practiced, I am fascinated with the subject.

On this blog, I am quick to share what I think are the most sensible and most scientifically valid methods to eat healthy, lose weight and improve health.

I believe in these things. That is the truth.

The problem for me, is that I am terrible at following my own advice.

Now it's time to confess...

I constantly eat junk foods. All the time.

I eat so much of them that it would make most people cringe.

Believe me when I say it, that I can make some of the worst bingers and un-health conscious people out there look like amateurs.

I can eat an entire pizza, then a large ice cream afterwards. At the bakery, I will order food that would suffice for three hungry people and I will finish all of it in one sitting.

After a particularly massive binge some time ago I decided to calculate the calories in it and it turned out I ate 5.000 calories.

That's 2 days worth of calories for a grown man, in one sitting.

Disgusting, I know. And I tend to feel like shit afterwards.

I am not proud of this. In fact, I am ashamed.

I don't talk about this problem much, although I've started to be more open about it in the past few weeks to my best friends and close family.

It is hard to explain why I do it, but I know that it does have a lot to do with my severely addictive personality and my background as an addict.

## **My Background as an Addict**

I am a recovering alcoholic and a drug addict, with a history of 6 rehabs, jail, a week in a mental hospital along with several trips to the emergency room due to overdose.

During this time, I hurt a lot of people, did a lot of bad things, wasted several years of my life and quite a few brain cells.

Luckily, my mom never lost faith in me and she was the one who practically forced me into each and every rehab. Without her, I'd probably be dead, and to her I will forever be grateful.

I also used to smoke cigarettes, but managed to give that up after multiple attempts.

But this is who I was in the past... which ended on January 4th of 2007 when I stepped into rehab for the last time.

You could say that my personality is as addictive as it gets. For me, things that I "enjoy" tend to become an all or nothing deal.

## **Addiction to Unhealthy Foods?**

With time, especially in the past 2-3 years or so, I've been developing an addiction to unhealthy foods.

Full blown addiction. Nothing more, nothing less.

These foods almost invariably contain either sugar, or wheat, or both, with a few exceptions.

The symptoms are exactly the same as drug and nicotine addiction, just a different substance and the social consequences aren't as severe.

The obsessive-compulsive nature, the thought processes, the lack of self-control...

Craving ice cream feels the same as craving a cigarette or amphetamine... **exactly the same.**

## **I've Tried to Stop More Often Than I Can Count**

I am ashamed of this problem. I am ashamed of the fact that I've been telling people not to do something that I am too weak to stay away from myself.

But believe me, I've tried to stop. More often than I can count.

Sometimes, when motivation finds me, I can stay away from these foods for about a week or so.

Everything goes well... the scale starts to go down and I start to feel a lot better. I actually start feeling good in my own skin again.

But then, one moment, this "idea" pops up...

The idea that it would be a good idea for me to have a "cheat meal" today. I suddenly have a hard time remembering why on earth I'd ever thought that cheat meals were a bad idea for me.

I forget the fact that the last 100 times I had a cheat meal ended with a long binge, I will forget the fact that I know I am addicted to the food and I'll forget all the wonderful reasons I have for wanting to abstain from it.

It's almost as if the logical part of my brain shuts down and the obsessive-compulsive urge takes over.

It's not the fact that the cravings are so strong, it's more about the fact that my logic and willpower suddenly become so weak during these moments.

Maybe 1 times out of a 100, I manage to muster up the willpower to abstain when this feeling comes up.

But what usually happens, is that I will indulge and have pizza, ice cream or whatever it is that I am craving.

Now, I will go on a week-long binge where everything but the unhealthiest foods will be as appetizing as vomit in my mind. I will cringe at the thought of a healthy meal and I'll binge on crap every day until I feel ill.

I will gain weight, feel like crap, sleep like crap until I finally get sick of all of it and decide to eat healthy again.

Rinse. Repeat.

This has been going on for years now and I am sick of it.

## The Law of Addiction

During all my rehabs and all my previous attempts at giving up drugs and smoking, I learned quite a few things about addiction and how to beat it.

Out of the many things I learned, one particular fact is especially important and it is called "The Law of Addiction":

**"Administration of a drug to an addict will cause re-establishment of chemical dependence upon the addictive substance."**

An ex smoker who has one puff of a cigarette will become addicted again... instantly. It is almost inevitable.

An alcoholic who has a beer or a shot of vodka will start drinking again, with all the horrible consequences that follow.

This is how addiction works. That is a fact.

I'm starting to think that food addiction is no different.

One bite of wheat bread, one sip of coke or a spoonful of ice cream will re-establish the addiction.



One bite and it's over. Same as with smoking, same as with alcohol, same as with heroin.

Of course, this doesn't apply to everyone. Some people can eat these foods in moderation, but many can't.

Some people can tolerate cheat meals, but I think many of those who are eating healthy and keep having cheat meals will fail eventually.

Sure, they may be able to "cheat" once a week for a few months, while they are highly motivated to improve their health.

But... if they have started to succumb to food addiction then it is almost inevitable that it will take hold of them again, as soon as the motivation to eat healthy starts to fade.

Motivation and willpower are temporary resources.

The day they run out, when eating healthy and losing weight isn't as motivating as before, those weekly cheat meals may quickly turn into daily indulgences and the quest to improve health will fade into memory.

If some of these ideas resonate with you and seem familiar, then perhaps you have the same problem as I do.

It may not be quite as obvious as it is for me, but you may be somewhere on the spectrum.

You don't need to have problems with alcohol, smoking or drugs to become addicted to junk food. It is pretty common, actually.

If you binge eat and you've had difficulties quitting or setting rules for yourself in the past, then this is definitely something you should look into.

## **What I am Going To Do About it**

I've decided that moderation isn't working for me.

Telling me to eat sugar/wheat in moderation is like telling me to smoke, drink or do drugs in moderation. Not possible.

I am going to approach this matter just like I approached giving up drugs and smoking.

I do realize that if I have a line of speed then it's all over. It might ruin my life, literally, potentially having consequences that are worse than death.

If I have a puff of a cigarette then I will become addicted again. It is inevitable. I'd probably be back to a pack-a-day the next day.

The same applies to junk food, for me at least.

I have decided that I am going to completely abstain from the foods that I am addicted to.

Complete abstinence is the only thing that consistently works for true addicts. Moderation fails, every time. That is a fact.

No cheating on Christmas, no cheating on New Years Eve, not on my birthday, not ever. It may seem like a large sacrifice, but it is nothing compared to what I gain if I succeed.

The foods I have the biggest problems with are sugar and gluten grains (especially wheat). I also have to be careful with some other foods that cause me problems, but it is by far the most important to avoid sugar and gluten grains, at all costs.

I am going to read the ingredients lists on everything I eat. If there is even a hint of added sugar (or HFCS) or a hint of gluten (wheat, barley, spelt, rye) in a food then I won't eat it.

This isn't the first time I've made this decision, the people who are close to me have heard this all before.

But this time I am determined.

If I can quit drugs and smoking, then I sure as hell can quit eating junk food.

## How The Brain Responds to Reward

To understand how addiction works, we must understand how the human brain is programmed to seek out „reward.“

When we do certain things that promote our survival as a species, like have sex or eat food, there is an elevated activity in an area of the brain called the „reward system.“

The reward system is stimulated by activities that cause dopamine to be released in a part of the brain called the Nucleus Accumbens.

When this happens, we experience a feeling of pleasure.

When we learn that something gives us pleasure (dopamine in the reward center) we have a natural tendency to repeat the activity so that we can experience that pleasure again.

This is how human beings are designed and it is critical to the survival of our species.

The activities we find in nature that give us a sense of reward are usually things that increase our chances of survival and being able to pass our genes on to the next generation.

We were made this way by evolution.

The problem today is that some modern man-made things can cause rewards that are exceptionally powerful. Way more powerful than anything we might come across in nature.

If we do something that gives us a powerful reward... a powerful sense of pleasure, we naturally want to do it again.

Take cocaine as an example. A person who snorts cocaine for the first time will get high, experience immense pleasure and the activity in the reward system of the brain will be extremely high.

Cocaine is a so-called „superstimulus.“ It stimulates so much dopamine, invokes such a powerful sense of reward and pleasure, that it exceeds anything you might come across in nature.



That's why people who try cocaine once want to use it again.

When they use cocaine repeatedly, the dopamine receptors start to „down-regulate“ – which means that there will be fewer receptors to accept the same amount of dopamine.

This is called tolerance and is the reason addicts need higher doses to achieve the same level of reward as before.

When that person stops using cocaine, the dopamine activity in the reward system will become very low and the person will go into withdrawal, feel miserable and get a strong urge (craving) to have more cocaine.

This is how people become addicted to things. Nicotine, alcohol, cocaine, ecstasy and heroin all work this way.

Addiction is merely a manifestation of the way humans are hard-wired to seek out things that give the brain a feeling of „reward.“

For certain people with a certain predisposition to addiction, this physical dependence can become so powerful that they are willing to sacrifice **everything** for it.

They stop eating, quit school, lose their jobs, stop talking to their families, commit crimes, steal, become prostitutes, etc.

If you think I'm being overly dramatic, think again. Junk foods impact the **exact same centers in the brain** and can have the same effect on people.

The effect might not be quite as powerful as for a heroin addict, but it's still powerful enough.

Eating donuts and ice cream releases dopamine in the nucleus accumbens, just like cocaine. Not nearly as much, but the effect is still powerful enough to cause dependence in many people.

Addictive foods can cause such a powerful reward in the brain that people become hooked, addicted, start eating more than they would otherwise and just **can not stop**, no matter how hard they try.

Craving these foods is not about hunger. It is the brain actively seeking out a food that it knows will cause a powerful surge of dopamine in the reward system.

This is what the brain wants and is hardwired to seek. Throughout evolution this was a good thing. We might experience pleasure after eating an apple and this would make us want to eat more apples, which give us energy and nutrients and help us survive.

But when it comes to the hyper-rewarding foods available to us literally everywhere today, this same natural reward-seeking behaviour becomes our greatest enemy.

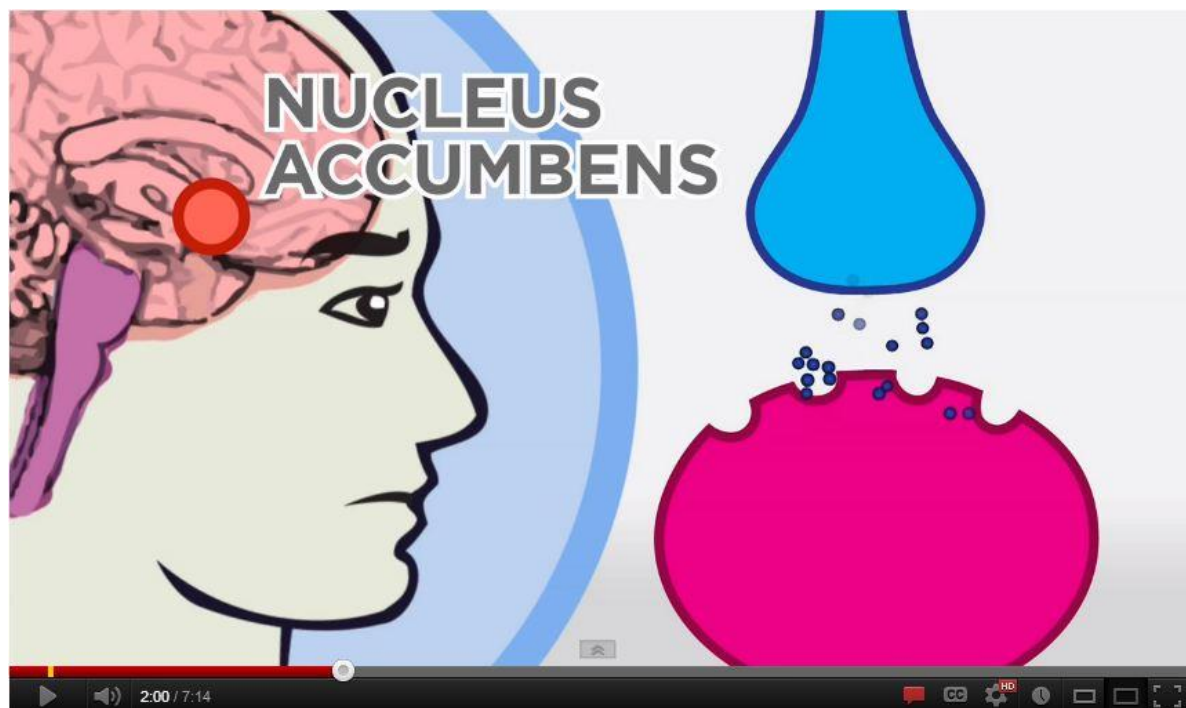
For certain individuals that are becoming addicted to these incredibly stimulating foods, this powerful reward-seeking behaviour

can overpower logic, reason and the brain's natural tendency to prevent us from eating too much.

The power these foods have over some people is so strong that literally nothing can get in the way. Some people are unable to quit despite severe physical problems like obesity and diabetes.

To understand how all of this works, take a moment to watch this 7 minute YouTube video by Robert H. Lustig M.D. (endocrinologist) and Dr. Elissa S. Epel (psychologist).

This video is a **MUST WATCH**.



[Watch: <http://authoritynutrition.com/how-sugar-makes-you-addicted/>]

## How The Food Industry Takes Advantage of This

In a market where competition is as fierce as it is in the food industry, there is a strong financial incentive to make foods as „good“ as possible.

They want to design foods that make us feel good, that give us pleasure, that cause a strong surge of dopamine in the reward center of the brain.

That is how they turn people into repeat customers and make money.

The best way for them to do this is to make foods that stimulate our taste buds and senses in a powerful way, particularly by making foods with high amounts of **sugar, fat and salt**.

Don't get me wrong, „sweet“ isn't bad and neither is „fatty“ or „salty“ – at least not in foods that are accessible in nature (real foods).

But when all three are combined in a processed, highly engineered product, this becomes a major problem.

Food companies also employ chemical engineers to invent artificial flavours that make the rewarding effects even stronger.

Foods high in sugar, fat and salt along with artificial flavours and amazing textures can give consumers so much pleasure and cause such a powerful reward that they become hooked.

Coca Cola, Snickers bars, Doritos chips... there has been an immense amount of resources spent on these foods in order to make them as rewarding as possible.

All of these foods are highly refined engineering masterpieces, designed to cause so much pleasure that we become hooked.

This is why we become **addicted** to these foods, because of their powerful effects on the reward system. They activate reward-seeking behaviour that can overpower logic and reason and the body's innate mechanisms to balance energy intake and expenditure.

Another thing that the food companies do is that they market these products in a particular way. Their marketing is especially aggressive towards children, which is a crime against humanity in my opinion.



Kids „love“ these foods, but they are terrible for their health and may literally set them up as addicts before they're old enough to know what the consequences of their actions are.

These foods are often given to kids when they are being rewarded for good behavior, or on occasions like birthdays.

This begins a psychological conditioning process associating hyper-rewarding junk foods with good behaviour and celebration.

The bottom line is that a clever combination of food engineering and marketing creates products that turn (some) people into addicts who lose control over their behavior.

In the face of addiction to these hyper-rewarding foods, „moderation“ becomes impossible. Willpower fails and people start eating more calories than they expend and ultimately get fat.

This clip is from CBS's show 60 minutes, where they take a peek inside the flavor industry to learn how addictive foods are created:

[Junk Foods Are Manipulated by Chemical Engineers to Make us Overeat](#)

## The Vicious Eating Cycle Explained

The reason I named this book "**Vicious** Eating" is because of the **vicious cycle** that is typical for the eating habits of food addicts like myself.

There are several components to this vicious cycle and it all makes perfect sense when you consider the effects the addictive foods have on the reward system.

When reading this, be aware that you do NOT need to relate to everything. People are different and not everyone experiences this in the same way.



The vicious eating cycle consists of: cues, cravings and rewards.

## Cues

The first component of the vicious eating cycle is the “cue.”

For me personally, cravings sometimes seem to appear out of thin air.

I suddenly begin to crave some unhealthy food like pizza or ice cream and the desire starts to dominate my attention.

But often, cravings are caused by some kind of trigger, which is known as a cue.

The definition:

**Cue = a stimulus, either conscious or subconscious, that causes a craving for a certain food.**

Let me take a smoker as an example to explain how this works.

The nicotine in cigarettes causes dopamine release in the reward center of the brain, just like when we eat sugar.

A smoker may get into the habit of always having a cigarette after a certain activity. Smoking right after a meal, for example.

When a smoker has a cigarette right after a meal often enough, the act of finishing a meal will become associated with having a cigarette. Over time, the brain will start to expect nicotine (reward - dopamine) each time the smoker finishes a meal.

Even after the smoker quits, the associations in the brain will still be there and it will call for nicotine at the end of meals, triggering cravings.



This is how various smells, sights, behaviors and places can trigger cravings, sometimes without us even realizing what happened. Our brains have learned to associate them with a reward.

This can happen consciously but it is often completely unconscious and it may be impossible for us to identify what it is that starts the cravings.

Cues can come in many forms. You might walk past a bakery and smell fresh baked bread, you might be walking past a McDonalds or an ice cream parlor, you might be waiting in line at the grocery store and see your favourite candy bar by the register.

Your brain has learned to associate these things with a reward and therefore the mere sight of them can trigger cravings.

Emotional states can also become cues. Simply feeling depressed is a common cue for many people.

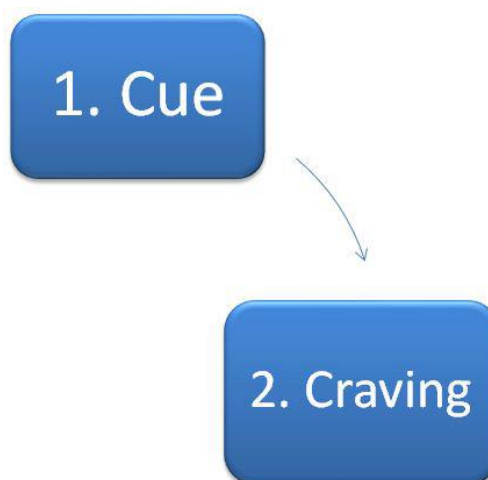
If you tend to use junk food to make yourself feel better when you're lonely, sad or depressed, then these emotional states might become cues because your brain is used to being rewarded when you feel that way.

It's important to realize that the same way cues can be formed, they can just as easily be broken. If you encounter a cue often enough without acting on it, then it will eventually go away completely.

## Cravings

A key component of food addiction is cravings, which are not to be confused with hunger.

Hunger is a feeling of discomfort or weakness caused by lack of food, coupled with the desire to eat.



However, cravings are an entirely different phenomenon.

Cravings do not occur because you need energy or nutrients, they occur because your brain wants dopamine.

**Food craving = an intense desire to consume a certain food, stronger than normal hunger.**

Cravings and hunger, even though being two different things, can happen at the same time.

When we're hungry *and* get a craving at the same time, the desire to eat will be even stronger.

Being hungry can also trigger cravings, one of the reasons people tend to binge eat if they don't eat for a long time and allow themselves to become ravenously hungry.

But we can also get cravings without being hungry. For example, we might crave ice cream soon after eating a fulfilling, nutritious meal.

It's obvious that craving an unhealthy food right after eating a fulfilling meal isn't about hunger.

## **What a Craving Feels Like**

I want to do my best to explain to you what a craving feels like, at least what it feels like to me.

For obvious reasons it is impossible for me to read minds, but this is how I experience it and many people I have spoken with say that a craving feels similar to them.

For me, sometimes a craving appears out of thin air, but other times there is an obvious cue (trigger) such as family members eating ice cream on a day that I had decided not to.

A craving is a feeling, an emotional state. It is a desire to eat a particular food, usually junk food like pizza, cookies or ice cream.

I don't always crave the exact same things, but there are a few brands or products that I crave often.

When the craving starts, I begin to think about a particular food in an obsessive way.

It becomes hard for me to stop thinking about it and focus my attention on something else. Sometimes it's downright impossible.

Basically, this desire starts to dominate my attention.

As an example, I often used to set rules for myself about cheat days, Fridays being my day of choice. Friday nights usually included pizza with the family, along with a movie and a few treats afterwards.

It was incredibly difficult for me to stick to only cheating on Fridays. I'd frequently get cravings on Mondays, Tuesdays... or any day of the week for that matter.

When these cravings appeared and I started "wanting" to break my rule and "cheat" on a day other than Friday, the desire would start to dominate my attention and I wasn't able to think about anything else.

Usually, I did put up a fight. I had logically decided that I wasn't going to cheat on other days than Fridays, so I tried to resist. At these moments, there would be an internal conflict going on in my brain.

I wanted two things at the same time: 1) I wanted to lose weight and only eat junk foods one day a week. 2) I really wanted to eat that piece of junk food... now.

It is important to be aware of the fact that there are two different parts of the brain at play here. My logical decision was made by other brain centers than my desire to eat the junk food.

The brain cortex is involved in logic and reason, while a more „primitive“ part of the brain – the reward system – is in control of reward-seeking behaviour.

When I got a craving for a particular food and tried to resist it because I had made a previous decision not to eat it, a „battle“ occurred between the „logical“ and the „primitive“ parts of my brain.

I started “thinking” really hard about why I should give in and why I shouldn’t. One part of my thoughts wanted to abstain and be healthy, the other wanted to give in to the craving and eat.

It’s kind of like my brain was arguing with itself, which in reality is exactly what was happening. One part of my brain, the reward system, really wanted junk food.

The other part, the cerebral cortex that controls logic and reason, wanted to abstain because it knew it was bad for me and that I had previously decided not to eat it.

I would invent excuses why it would be easier for me to stick to the plan if I started the next day instead, or that it would be okay for me to cheat this day because of some special circumstances.

It would become difficult to remember exactly how bad I felt last time I ate these foods and how much I wanted to stop doing it.

Usually this ended with me giving in and eating whatever it was that I was craving. The reward system won the battle against the brain cortex, so to speak.

Afterwards, the reasons or excuses I made up to justify this behavior usually seemed fairly ridiculous.

Don’t think I’m talking crazy. You may not be familiar with this because it happens almost subconsciously. Next time you get a craving, try to be aware of the thoughts that are at play in your mind.

It is literally like two parts of the brain arguing with each other, at least for me and other people I have spoken with.

The desire driven by the reward system is very powerful and for some people (like myself) the brain cortex that controls logic, reason and “willpower” just don’t stand a chance.

Humans aren't robots, we are emotional creatures and the parts of our brain that control behaviour can not easily be dominated by the more intelligent parts of the brain. The brain doesn't work that way.

Like I mentioned before, I have several friends who are also recovering addicts. They all agree that cravings for addictive foods feel the same way as cravings for drugs.

## Reward

When you give in to the craving and start eating the food you were craving, the "reward" begins. The reward, as explained above, is about dopamine release in the reward center of the brain.



To our conscious minds, the reward is experienced as pleasure.

There's something "good" about eating the food. We don't really feel or even care about what's happening in the brain, all we know is that we really enjoy eating it.

When we eat a food that we were craving, we often end up eating more than we intended to. What starts as a slice of cake turns into half a cake, one M&M turns into 30. It doesn't happen to everyone, but it is common.

Eating such foods in “moderation” or having “just a bite or two” will usually fail because as soon as you start eating, your brain will call for more and more and more until it has received the amount of dopamine it was expecting.

The longer you keep doing this... craving, indulging, craving, indulging... the more you will need to eat to get the same level of reward. A tolerance to the rewarding effects can build up over time.

Perhaps 5 years ago three slices of pizza were enough, but today you may need 6 slices and 3 glasses of coke to feel satisfied.

The key thing to remember here is that giving in to the craving and eating the addictive food will only make the craving come back stronger next time. If you don't give in, next time it will be weaker.

Getting the reward that you were craving only strengthens the association and feeds the addiction, making it stronger.

This is the definition of a vicious cycle:

**Vicious cycle = one trouble leads to another that aggravates the first.**

The cue leads to a craving which leads to a reward. The process of rewarding yourself only makes the brain's association with the cue even stronger, so that next time it will be even more powerful.

This is how it goes:

“Cue -> Craving -> Reward” -> “Stronger Cue -> Stronger Craving -> Reward” -> “STRONGER CUE -> STRONGER CRAVING -> Reward” ...

Each of these times, needing a bigger “dose” to achieve the same level of reward.

This may seem overly simplistic and it is. The process of addiction is complex, but this is the basic gist of it.

This happens slowly, over a long period of time, but the bottom line is that the longer you allow this vicious cycle to keep propagating, the **stronger it will become.**

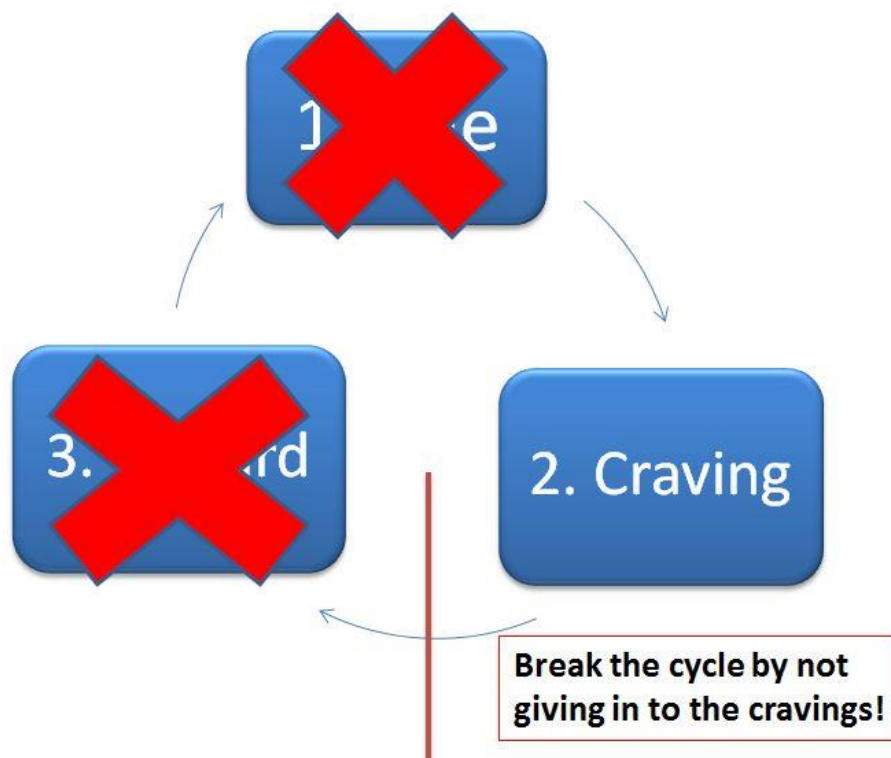
## How to Break The Cycle

Breaking the vicious eating cycle is very simple, but can be difficult and will require sacrifices.

**The only way is to stop eating these addictive foods. Period.**

When you do that, over time your brain will stop associating cues with rewards and you will stop getting cravings. You will find other ways to cope when you feel bad and depressed.

It takes time and patience and it can be difficult at first if you are having cravings all the time, but the important thing to keep in mind is that it gets easier over time.



Every time you don't give in to a craving, you will have won a minor battle and the craving will be weaker next time.



Don't get me wrong, it's actually **not that common** to be constantly plagued with cravings after you've made the decision to abstain completely.

Not even inviting the option of having these foods makes this so much easier. Abstinence isn't nearly as hard as trying to use self discipline and have everything in "moderation."

The bottom line is that abstaining from these foods is what works, plain and simple.

Same as with smoking, amphetamine and alcohol addiction, abstinence is the only thing that works.

But this is easier said than done because these foods are literally everywhere and some of them are significant parts of our culture and social lives.

This makes food addiction even more complex in many ways compared to other addictions.

Some people may be able to learn to eat in moderation again after they've broken the vicious eating cycle. It happens.

But if you want to beat this awful problem, that poisons your body and other aspects of your life, complete abstinence for *at least* a few months is **required and there is NO way around it.**

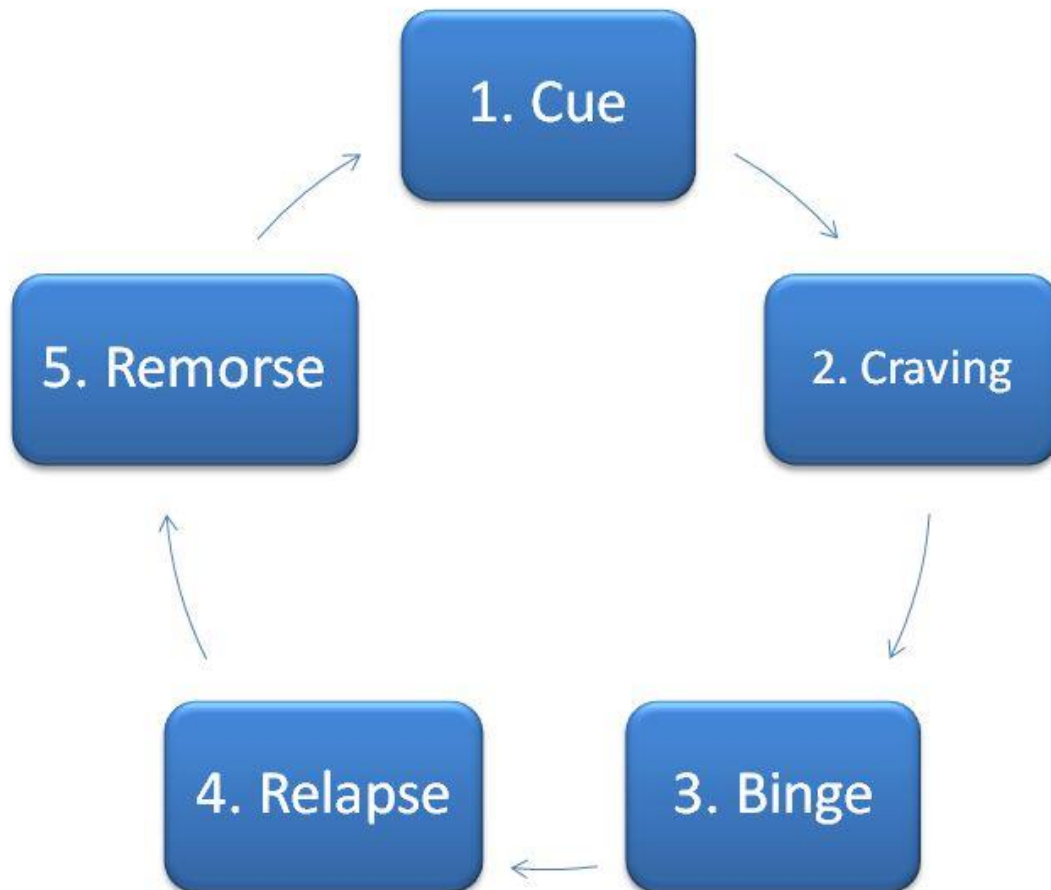
## **Beyond Reward: Binge Eating, Relapses and Remorse.**

Like I said before, "food addiction" is a spectrum. It is not an "on or off" state. Some people have bigger issues than others.

For some, especially those who have a stronger predisposition to addiction, this can develop into an even more serious condition. What I am about to describe goes beyond simple reward-seeking behaviour.

People who are particularly sensitive to addictive foods start to exhibit other symptoms and behaviours that make their issues even more complex.

Simply put, if the description above referred to a “normal” food addict then what I am about to describe now is an “advanced” food addict.



## Binge Eating

At the heart of the behaviour of the “more advanced” food addict is “binge eating.”

**Binge eating = a pattern of disordered eating which consists of episodes of uncontrollable eating.**

A binge is characterized by episodes of uncontrollable eating. A person may eat very fast, to the point of feeling uncomfortable or even sick.

When I used to get cravings, I didn't want to eat a little bit. I wanted to eat BIG.

Having just a scoop of ice cream or two slices of pizza wasn't enough to satisfy me, I might as well not bother. I literally *wanted to* binge to the point of feeling uncomfortable.

I used to do this several times a week and often many days in a row.

People who do this are usually ashamed of their behaviour and may prefer to do it in private and hide it from their loved ones.

Afterwards, they often feel disgusted with themselves and decide to never do it again.

That's how I felt, every time. **Disgusted** with myself. But the memory of that feeling had always disappeared when the next craving showed up.

Not every food addict binge eats, but it is fairly common.

## Relapse

Relapse is another characteristic feature of those with "advanced" food addiction.

**Relapse = Resuming the use of an addictive food after a period of abstinence.**

What this basically means is that if you have abstained from eating addictive foods for a long time, then one day give in to a craving and eat these foods, you will start eating them more frequently again.

A smoker who has one puff of a cigarette after three years of abstinence will become addicted again. It's not uncommon for smokers to be back to a pack-a-day habit **the next day**.

Same as with smoking, if a food addict who has managed to abstain for a long time decides to “cheat” one day and eat an addictive food, it is quite likely that this person would not be able to stop.

It’s hard to realize the significance of this unless you’ve ever managed to abstain for a long time.

For example, let’s say that you decide you’ve had it with unhealthy foods, you become really motivated to lose weight and you manage two whole months without a single bite of junk food.

Everything is going well. The scale is moving down, clothes are becoming looser and you are feeling great.

But one day, a craving shows up. You now convince yourself that since you’ve managed to display such remarkable self-control and willpower that now you’ve “gotten” it.

You think you will be able to control yourself this time and that having ice cream for once isn’t going to harm you, right?

Wrong.

Two months of abstinence, feeling awesome, losing weight and seeing remarkable results... all ruined.

Now you start eating unhealthy foods again, all the time. Every single day until you have gained all the weight back and then some, in just a third of the time that it took to get it off.

This is what “relapse” is. When you’ve abstained for a certain period of time, then indulge and suddenly find yourself back at the starting point and have a hard time quitting again.

After a relapse, it can often be next to impossible to get back on the wagon, that motivation you felt during your two months of abstinence will be gone.

There *are* people who can “cheat” occasionally, then get back on the wagon next day.

But I honestly think that for many people who keep having occasional “cheat meals,” when the motivation to be healthy runs out (it usually does) then a full-blown relapse will occur.

Personally, I did manage a few periods of abstinence in the years that I was an active food addict, the longest was 2 whole months.

Every time I decided to “cheat” it would lead me to lose control and binge every day for days or weeks until I had gained all the weight back.

Not everyone who has problems with food addiction will relapse this way, but it happens.

People who have lost a lot of weight, then gained it all back in a short amount of time (yo-yo dieting) may relate to this.

## Remorse

After a period of relapse, characterized by frequent binge eating and weight regain, it is not uncommon to feel remorse and have a strong urge to take back control of your life and start eating healthy again.

For “advanced” food addicts like myself, feeling remorse and managing to be healthy for a few days or weeks after a particularly long binge/relapse is not uncommon.

Until the next cue, of course, when a new craving shows up... then the whole cycle is repeated all over again.

## Is Food Addiction an Appropriate Word?

I am going to copy-paste a few paragraphs from the [Wikipedia page](#) for addiction and explain how they are 100% relatable to food addiction.

„Addiction is the continued use of a **mood altering substance** or behavior despite **adverse dependency consequences**, or a

neurological impairment leading to such behaviors.“

Junk food is a *mood altering substance* because it gives us pleasure.

It also makes us gain weight and ultimately, become sick. Gaining weight is very bad for both our physical and mental health and fits with *adverse dependency consequences*.

„Classic hallmarks of addiction include: impaired control over substances/behavior, preoccupation with substance/behavior, continued use despite consequences, and denial.“

As I will cover in detail in Part 3 (How to Know if You're Addicted), these are classic signs of food addiction.

„Habits and patterns associated with addiction are typically characterized by immediate gratification (**short-term reward**), coupled with delayed deleterious effects (**long-term costs**).“

Short-term reward, we've covered that already. The long term deleterious effects are obvious and they include weight gain and poor health. Continued use may end up causing serious diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

„Physiological dependence occurs when the body has to adjust to the substance by incorporating the substance into its 'normal' functioning. This state creates the conditions of **tolerance** and **withdrawal**.“

This one is hard to prove in humans and the effects may be so subtle that it can be hard to point them out.

However, binge eating is a clear sign of tolerance, because we need to eat more to reach the same level of reward as before. Feeling unhappy when we don't eat these foods is a sign of withdrawal.

As I will explain in Part 2, there are studies in rats that clearly demonstrate that sugar and other hyper-rewarding foods lead to both tolerance and withdrawal, making them **physically addictive**.

The symptoms of food addiction also fit into the DSM-IV Substance Dependence Criteria, which is the formal criteria used by psychiatrists to diagnose substance abuse (2).

Disregarding the formal definitions and criteria for addiction, I also happen to **know** what addiction is.

I've been there. I know how it feels to be addicted to substances that are known to be addictive, such as nicotine and amphetamine. Food addiction feels **exactly the same**.

„Food addiction“ *is* the right term to describe this problem.

I also happen to believe that the eating disorders Binge Eating Disorder and Compulsive Overeating are highly related, even identical, as they share the same symptoms.

The symptoms of Bulimia Nervosa are very similar as well.

The advice in this book may also be very helpful for those disorders.

## Part 2 - Reasons to Avoid Sugar and Gluten Like The Plague

What I am going to recommend that you do is to abstain from added sugars, preferably for the rest of your life... at least for 1-3 months if you want to give „moderation“ another shot eventually.

Most people will probably want to avoid gluten as well, especially wheat.

If you find that you can eat wheat and other gluten-grains (rye, spelt and barley) without problems, then you may not need to remove them from your life... although it is still likely to improve your health and help you lose weight.

Don't worry – there are plenty of foods you can eat. Natural sugars in fruits and non-gluten grains like oats, rice, etc. are fine. More on this later.

But gluten and sugar are literally everywhere. Not just in the usual suspects like ice cream and bread, but in all sorts of processed foods.

If you look at the ingredients labels, you will frequently find added sugars and/or wheat. Even foods disguised as health foods are likely to contain these ingredients.

Abstaining from these foods is a pretty big deal, so I better give you some damn good reasons why you should, which is the purpose of this part of the book.

I am going to explain how added sugars set up a powerful biochemical drive in your brain to eat more and get fat.

I will also explain how added sugars are literally the WORST ingredient in the modern diet and probably a leading cause of metabolic syndrome, obesity, heart disease, type II diabetes and even cancer.

Then I will turn to modern wheat and gluten, which are right behind sugar in their damaging effects on the body.

I'm also going to make the case for the potential addictiveness of wheat, which has NOT been proven (yet) but I personally find the idea pretty convincing and seems to be true for myself and many others that I've spoken to.



# 4 Ways Sugar Makes You Fat (A Recipe for Fat Gain Disaster)

Before I get into this, for the sake of being fair I'd like to point out that some people appear to tolerate these foods just fine.

We all know someone who can eat junk food like a horse, yet never gain an ounce of fat or suffer healthwise in any way. This, however, is rare.

You're probably not one of those rare few that can eat whatever they want without issues, otherwise you wouldn't be reading this.



The fact is that for MOST people, sugar and other junk foods are extremely bad.

Today, being at a „normal“ weight is the exception – not the rule. In the U.S. today, 2/3rds of people are either overweight or obese.

Added sugars, mainly sucrose (table sugar) and high fructose corn syrup, contain two molecules: glucose and fructose.

Glucose is a molecule that is absolutely vital to life. Our bodies produce it and we have a constant reservoir of it in our bloodstream.

We also get glucose from starchy foods like grains. Every cell in the body can make use of glucose to produce energy and the body can produce all the glucose it needs if it doesn't get enough from the diet.

Fructose, however, is very different. This molecule is not vital to life and humans do not produce it. In fact, very few cells in the body can make use of it except liver cells.

When we eat a lot of fructose, in the context of the standard western diet, then all of it gets metabolized by the liver and turned into fat.

This does NOT apply to fruit, which also have fructose, but are a real food with a low energy density, high water content and lots of fiber.

It ONLY applies to added sugars. For most people, fruits are a very minor source of fructose in the diet.

## 1. Fructose Causes Insulin Resistance

Have you ever heard of the hormone Insulin?

It is one of the key hormones that regulate human metabolism and energy use.

Insulin is secreted by the pancreas, then travels in the blood to peripheral cells like muscle cells.

Insulin sends a signal to these cells that they should put transporters for glucose onto their surface, allowing glucose to get into the cells where it can be used.

When we eat a high carb meal, glucose levels go up. Excess glucose is toxic so insulin rapidly goes up in order to get the glucose out of the bloodstream and into the cells.

If we didn't have insulin or it wasn't functioning correctly, blood glucose would reach toxic levels.

In healthy people, this mechanism works very well and enables us to eat meals that are high in carbohydrates without our blood glucose levels going out of whack.

However this mechanism tends to break. Cells become resistant to the effects of insulin, which makes the pancreas have to secrete even more to drive the glucose into the cells.



Basically, when you become insulin resistant, you will have more insulin in your blood all the time (until the entire thing breaks and leads to type II diabetes... which can happen eventually).

But insulin also has other functions. One of them is sending signals to our fat cells. Insulin tells fat cells to pick up fat from the bloodstream, store it and to avoid burning fat that they already carry.

When insulin levels are chronically elevated, much of the energy in our bloodstream gets selectively deposited in the fat cells and stored. But what does this have to do with sugar?

Well, half of sugar is fructose and excess fructose consumption is a known cause of insulin resistance and elevated insulin levels in the blood ([3](#), [4](#)).

So it goes like this:

1. Eat a lot of sugar (fructose) -> 2. Cells become resistant to insulin -> 3. Pancreas have to produce even more insulin to reach the same effect -> 4. Insulin levels in the blood go up -> 5. The insulin tells the fat cells to start hoarding fat.

When this happens, the body has a hard time accessing its stored body fat and the brain starts to think that it is hungry.

This is **mechanism #1** of sugar-induced fat gain: Eating sugar causes constantly elevated insulin levels in the blood, which selectively deposits energy from foods into fat cells.

## **2. Fructose Causes Resistance to a Hormone Called Leptin**

Another way that fructose makes you fat is by its effects on a hormone called Leptin.

Leptin is a hormone that is secreted by the fat cells. The bigger the fat cells, the more leptin they secrete.

This is the „signal“ that your brain uses to determine how much fat is stored in the fat cells.

### It goes like this:

1. We eat a whole bunch of food.
2. Some of it gets stored in the fat cells.
3. The fat cells secrete more leptin.
4. The brain senses the increased leptin and interprets it as a signal that we have plenty of energy stored.
5. We stop eating.



This is a basic „negative feedback loop“ meaning that the output (increased leptin) reduces the input (eating).

This is the mechanism designed by nature to make us stop being hungry and eat less when there is plenty of fat in the fat cells. This is how evolution learned to protect us from obesity.

More leptin = we have enough energy = don't need to eat. Simple.

Increased leptin also makes us release more fat from our fat stores and raises the metabolic rate.

This is how it's supposed to work, but in overweight and obese people this mechanism is broken.

Overweight and obese individuals have a lot of body fat and therefore their fat cells secrete a lot of leptin, which should tell the brain that they're full and don't need to eat.

However, despite leptin levels being high, their brain has become „resistant“ to the effects of this hormone.

It's easy to see that if the brain becomes resistant to leptin (doesn't „see“ the leptin in the blood) then this regulatory process won't work.

If the brain doesn't sense the leptin, it won't know that the fat cells are full and there won't be any signal to tell the brain that it needs to stop eating.

Low leptin = don't have enough energy = need to eat more and burn less energy.

This is how leptin resistance makes us fat. The brain thinks that the fat cells are empty, that we are starving, and makes us eat more and burn less.

Trying to exert „willpower“ over the powerful leptin-driven starvation signal is next to impossible. This is why most people can't simply „eat less, move more“ and live happily ever after.

In order to be able to eat less, we have to get rid of the leptin resistance, so that our brain „sees“ all the fat that we have stored.

This means we have to get rid of all that excess fructose.

Fructose can induce leptin resistance by raising levels of triglycerides in the blood, which blocks the transport of leptin from the blood and into the brain ([5](#), [6](#)).

This is how excess sugar throws body fat regulation out of whack, making the brain think that it needs to keep eating. The fat cells are full of energy, but the brain doesn't see it and still thinks that it is starving.

This is **mechanism #2** of sugar-induced fat gain. Fructose makes the brain leptin resistant, which means that the brain doesn't „see“ all the stored fat in the body and thinks that it is starving.

This causes a **powerful leptin-driven biochemical force** to keep eating even when we don't need to.

To understand more about insulin and leptin and how they are affected by sugar, watch this video:



[Watch: <http://authoritynutrition.com/junk-food-brain-want-to-get-fat/>]

### 3. Fructose Does Not Induce Satiety in The Same Way as Glucose

The way the body and brain regulate food intake is extremely complex.

It involves multiple hormones that interact to make the brain decide whether to eat, or not to eat.

There is a region in the brain called the hypothalamus, where all of these signals are interpreted.

This is where leptin (discussed above) functions in the brain, along with various neurons and other hormones.

A relatively new study published in 2013



examined the effects of fructose vs. glucose on various attributes related to satiety and food intake (7).

They gave 20 healthy volunteers either a glucose-sweetened drink or a fructose-sweetened drink, scanned their brains and asked them a bunch of questions.

It turned out that while the glucose drink lowered blood flow in the hypothalamus (where food intake is controlled) the fructose drink did not.

This implies that the fructose-sweetened drink, despite having the same amount of calories, did NOT increase satiety.

The glucose drinkers felt less hungry and more satiated compared to the fructose drinkers, who didn't feel satisfied at all and were still somewhat hungry.

Another study showed that fructose did not reduce blood levels of a hormone called ghrelin nearly as much as glucose (8).

Ghrelin is a „hunger hormone“ secreted by the stomach. The more ghrelin, the more hungry you should be.

These studies suggest that fructose does not make you feel full after a meal in the same way as glucose, even though the amount of calories are exactly the same.

**Mechanism #3** of sugar-induced fat gain: Fructose does not make you feel full after a meal in the same way as glucose, which will lead to a net increase in overall calorie intake.

## 4. Sugar Makes You Addicted

Probably the strongest driver behind food addiction is sugar, because of its powerful impact on the reward system.

Sugar causes opiate and dopamine activity in the reward centers of the brain.



This is the same way that drugs of abuse like cocaine function to give us pleasure and make us addicted.

In a large review paper published in 2008 in the journal of Neuroscience & Biobehavioural Reviews, researchers examined the evidence for the addictive potential of sugar (9).

Most of these studies were done in rats and I believe rats to be good representatives of humans when it comes to addictive substances, because they become addicted to abusive drugs in the same way.

A quote from the study:

*„The evidence supports the hypothesis that under certain circumstances rats can become sugar dependent.*

*This may translate to some human conditions as suggested by the literature on eating disorders and obesity.“*

And another quote:

*„The concept of “food addiction” materialized in the diet industry on the basis of subjective reports, clinical accounts and case studies described in self-help books.*

*The rise in obesity, coupled with the emergence of scientific findings of parallels between drugs of abuse and palatable foods has given credibility to this idea.*

*The reviewed evidence supports the theory that, in some circumstances, intermittent access to sugar can lead to behavior and neurochemical changes that resemble the effects of a substance of abuse.“*

The evidence is very strong for sugar being downright addictive. It makes perfect sense given that it affects the same neural pathways as drugs of abuse.

Individuals that get strong cravings for sugar and are unable to quit or reduce their consumption despite negative physical consequences, are sugar addicts.



**Mechanism #4** of sugar-induced fat gain: Sugar, due to its powerful effects on the reward system in the brain, leads to classic signs of addiction, comparable to other drugs of abuse.

This activates powerful reward-seeking behavior that encourages overeating.

## The Perfect Recipe For a Fat Gain Disaster

Okay, so let's take a step back and review what we have covered already about fructose (from added sugars) and how it induces fat gain.



**#1** – Fructose causes **insulin resistance** and **raises insulin** levels in the body, which increases the accumulation of fat in the fat tissues.

**#2** – Fructose causes resistance to the hormone **leptin**, which makes your brain not „see“ that the fat cells are full of fat.

When that happens, your brain thinks that it is starving, which increases food intake AND decreases fat burning.

**#3** – Fructose **does not make you feel satiated** after meals. It does not lower levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin and it actually increases blood flow in the centers of the brain that control appetite. This increases overall food intake.

**#4** – Sugar, with its powerful impact on the reward system, causes **addiction** in certain individuals. This activates reward-seeking behaviour that also increases food intake.

So... excess fructose consumption both dysregulates short-term energy balance on a meal-to-meal basis AND long-term energy balance.

The more sugar you eat and the longer this process is allowed to continue, the more powerful it becomes.

Insulin and leptin resistance increase over time and the reward-seeking behaviour becomes stronger.

This ultimately makes you eat even more, causing a vicious cycle of eating sugar, gaining weight and eating more sugar.

This way, sugar sets up an extremely powerful biochemical drive in your brain to make you eat more, burn less and get fat.

All of this is relatively new data. Dietitians who haven't been keeping up to date will not know about this.

Most of them still claim that sugar is just empty calories.

NOTHING could be farther from the truth. Empty calories is just the tip of the iceberg, sugar is a **LEADING CAUSE** of obesity by its powerful effects on hormones and the brain.

## **Other Harmful Effects of Sugar**

There are many reasons to avoid sugar besides its effects on your weight.

- Sugar is empty calories. There are no vitamins or minerals in it.
- Sugar is known to cause tooth decay.
- Sugar raises blood levels of triglycerides, small dense LDL, oxidized LDL cholesterol, blood sugar and insulin levels. It also makes you gain fat around organs, otherwise known as visceral fat ([10](#), [11](#)).

This is how sugar can cause the metabolic syndrome, heart disease and type II diabetes.

- Sugar increases blood levels of uric acid, which can lead to gout and elevated blood pressure ([12](#), [13](#)).
- Sugar causes deposition of fats in the liver, which can lead to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease ([14](#), [15](#)).
- Sugar causes insulin resistance, a stepping stone towards obesity and type II diabetes ([16](#), [4](#)).
- Sugar raises blood levels of insulin and IGF-1, which may raise the risk of cancer ([17](#), [18](#)).

If this were a courtroom, the evidence would be enough to give both sugar and high fructose corn syrup a triple life sentence.

Hopefully I've managed to convince you that completely removing sugar from your diet has benefits that far outweigh the potential sacrifices.

If losing weight, feeling better, breaking the addiction and lowering your risk of all the major western diseases isn't reason enough to eliminate sugar, then I don't know what is.

If you haven't seen this lecture before, called „Sugar: The Bitter Truth“ – also by endocrinologist Robert H. Lustig, M.D., then you really have to watch it.

It is long, but it is about as entertaining as a movie in my opinion. I've watched it 4 times already.

This video will both educate you and motivate you about removing added sugars from your diet.



[Watch: <http://authoritynutrition.com/why-is-fructose-bad-for-you/>]

## Why Gluten Grains Are Bad For You

The evidence linking sugar to fat gain and disease is **very strong**.

There should be no doubt in your mind that avoiding added sugars is absolutely necessary if you want to break the food addiction.

But another food is important as well and this one is quite a bit more controversial than sugar. The evidence for its harmful effects isn't quite as strong... not yet, at least.

What I am referring to is **wheat**, the most abundant grain in the western diet. Most people eat some amount of wheat every day or literally at every single meal.

Some people have problems with sugar but can easily eat whole wheat foods in moderation and do fine.

I personally can not and many people I know have the exact same problems with wheat as they do with sugar.

If you tend to crave and lose control over foods like bread, pasta, bagels, pizza and other high-wheat foods, then you should seriously look at removing wheat from your diet as well.

If you can control yourself and don't think you have any problems with wheat or gluten, then you do not need to remove it from your diet (although it is still likely to improve your health).

## What is Gluten?

You've probably heard of gluten before. It is the main protein found in wheat, the biggest source of gluten in the modern diet.

Other grains related to wheat also contain it, including rye, barley, spelt, kamut, emmer, einkorn and triticale.

There is one feature that makes gluten very popular for baking and as a food additive.

This is the fact that it can form a sticky "cross-linking network".

Actually, the name **gluten** is derived from this "glue"-like feature, and you will know what I'm talking about if you've ever held wet dough in your hands.

When gluten forms these cross-links, it binds water and air, allowing bread products to rise during baking.



Due to its unique properties, gluten is often used to give foods a certain stability and texture, and may be found in products like Ketchup and Ice Cream (among others).

Therefore, if you want to avoid gluten then you better start reading ingredients labels. Simply skipping the bread is not enough.

## How Wheat Gluten Can Harm You

Evidence is mounting that a significant percentage of the population is sensitive to gluten ([19](#), [20](#), [21](#)).

When we eat gluten (wheat, spelt, rye and barley), the immune system in our digestive tract “attacks” the gluten proteins ([22](#)).

Controlled trials in people without celiac disease show that gluten damages the wall of the digestive tract, causing pain, bloating, stool inconsistency and tiredness ([23](#), [24](#)).



Gluten sensitivity is also associated with schizophrenia ([25](#), [26](#)) and cerebellar ataxia ([27](#), [28](#)) – both serious disorders of the brain.

This is not to suggest that gluten **causes** these diseases, only that consuming gluten may increase the chances of them developing in people who are already susceptible.

Gluten may be harmful for most people, not just those with diagnosed celiac disease or gluten sensitivity

## Wheat Spikes Blood Sugar Very Fast

Even whole wheat products usually aren’t made from actual “whole” grains.

The wheat has usually been pulverized into very fine flour. Even though this process preserves the nutrients, it causes these products to be digested rapidly.

The starches in pulverized flour get broken down quickly in the digestive tract and enter the bloodstream as glucose. This causes a rapid spike in blood sugar and insulin levels.

Even whole wheat bread spikes blood sugar faster than many candy bars ([29](#)).

When blood sugar goes up rapidly, it tends to go down just as quickly. When blood sugar goes down, we become hungry.



This is the blood sugar roller coaster that is familiar to people on high carb diets. Soon after eating, they become hungry again, which calls for another high-carb snack.

Elevated blood sugars can also cause glycation at the cellular level when the blood sugars react with proteins in the body. This is one of the components of ageing ([30](#)).

## **Appetite Stimulant, Potentially Addictive**

If you have ever gotten unnatural cravings for wheat containing products (such as pizza, pastries, bread, etc.) then it may have a biological mechanism.



The peptides formed when gluten is broken down by digestive enzymes are able to stimulate opioid receptors, which are the same receptors stimulated by endorphins and drugs like morphine ([31](#)).



An indicator of gluten peptides being able to cross the blood-brain barrier is the fact that gluten consumption may increase risk of mental disorders like schizophrenia and that celiac disease is associated with a 3-fold increase in risk of this disease ([25](#), [26](#)).

The administration of an opiate-blocking drug also changes the physiological responses to gluten, a strong indicator of it having an opiate-like activity ([32](#)).

Is wheat really addictive?

Only time will tell. It is **not scientifically proven** yet.

Given how common unnatural cravings are to wheat containing products, the idea seems plausible to me.

## Wheat Contains Other Harmful Substances

Many commercial wheat-based products also contain sugar or high fructose corn syrup, just like other processed foods.

As mentioned above, sugar causes many adverse effects and eating processed foods that contain it is likely to have detrimental effects on health.



Most grains also include the “anti nutrient” phytic acid.

Phytic acid is a molecule that strongly binds essential minerals like calcium, iron and zinc, preventing them from being absorbed ([33](#)).

## Wheat is Low in Essential Nutrients

There is NO nutrient in wheat that you can't get from other foods in even greater amounts.

Even whole wheat isn't as nutritious as you may think.



Not only is it low in nutrients compared to other real foods, it literally reduces the absorption of nutrients.

- Calorie for calorie, whole wheat foods contain a low amount of nutrients compared to real foods like vegetables.
- The phytic acid in them blocks absorption of minerals like iron, zinc and calcium ([34](#)).
- By damaging the intestinal lining, wheat gluten can decrease the absorption of all nutrients ([35](#)).
- Wheat does not contain all the essential amino acids and is therefore a poor source of protein for humans ([36](#)).
- Wheat may cause your body to burn through its Vitamin D stores faster and contribute to vitamin d deficiency ([37](#)), which is associated with cancer, diabetes and death ([38](#), [39](#), [40](#)).



## Wheat and Blood Lipids

In one study, 36 men were randomized into two groups. They were instructed to eat either whole oat cereal or whole wheat cereal ([41](#)).

After 12 weeks, the researchers measured blood lipid levels in both groups.

The group that ate oat cereal decreased LDL cholesterol and small, dense LDL. Basically, whole oats significantly improved the blood lipid profile.

However, the whole wheat cereal increased total LDL cholesterol by 8% and **small, dense LDL by a whopping 60%**.



Small, dense LDL is the type of cholesterol that is strongly associated with heart disease ([42](#), [43](#)).

What this means is that whole wheat significantly harms blood lipids and may drastically raise your risk of heart disease.

Yes, that slice of “heart-healthy” whole wheat bread may be killing you.

## **Whole Wheat is the Lesser of Two Evils**

It is true that whole wheat is better for you than refined wheat. It contains more nutrients and fiber.

However, it is just the lesser of two evils. It’s like comparing unfiltered cigarettes to filtered cigarettes. Filtered cigarettes are less harmful, but that does NOT make them healthy.

## **Should You Avoid Wheat?**

I believe wheat to be extremely harmful. But only you can decide whether you should give it up completely.

Some people don’t have issues with wheat, others only have issues with refined wheat. Then there are people who can’t eat wheat but do absolutely fine with other gluten grains like spelt, rye and barley.



I personally have made the decision to remove **all gluten grains** from my life, because I feel that I am addicted to them and unable to control myself.

There is no physiological need for these foods, all the nutrients we get from them can be found in greater amounts in other foods.

I honestly believe that 80% of the effectiveness of low-carb and paleo diets are caused by them replacing **sugar and wheat** with real foods.

The „sugar-free, gluten-free“ lifestyle is rapidly becoming more popular and people who banish these foods from their diets usually lose a lot of fat and see major improvements in health.

## Part 3 - How to Know if You're Addicted



Now we have covered quite thoroughly what food addiction is and how it works.

If there is any doubt in your mind, this chapter will guide you into knowing whether you have this problem or not.

Take note that none of this is black and white. This is **not** an exact science. Food addiction is a spectrum and we're all unique.

According to my experience and research, there are 8 primary symptoms of food addiction. Some of them are included in medical criteria for substance dependence, others are not.

I'm going to discuss each of the 8 symptoms separately. I want you to think if and how well they apply to you.

After that, I want you to answer a short quiz, which will help you figure out where you are on the spectrum

## The 8 Symptoms of Food Addiction

I'm not a psychologist and I don't pretend to be one online.

These 8 symptoms are based on my own experiences as well as the countless research I've done on the matter.

### 1. Cravings Despite Being Full

It is not uncommon to get cravings, even after eating a fulfilling, nutritious meal.

For example... you've just downed a nice meal with steak, potatoes and veggies... then find yourself craving some ice cream for dessert.

You see, cravings and hunger aren't the same thing.

You don't feel "hungry" ... because you just finished a healthy and nutritious meal, but yet there is an urge somewhere in your brain to eat something else.

This is pretty common and doesn't necessarily mean that you have a problem. Most people get cravings.

But if this happens to you often and you have real problems controlling yourself, then it may be an indicator of something unnatural going on.

How can it be normal to crave a piece of unhealthy food after you've just eaten a healthy meal?

What physiological need does this craving serve? None, whatsoever.

It's simply your brain calling for something that it knows will stimulate its reward center.

## 2. Eat Much More Than You Intended to

What harm is there in having a small slice of chocolate cake?

A little bit ain't gonna kill you... everything is good in moderation, right?

These are two remarks that we get to hear quite often when we refuse an offering of unhealthy food for one reason or another.

They are both valid remarks. One slice isn't going to do us much harm and if we can eat cake in moderation then it's probably okay.

But... for some people, there is NO such thing as a bite or a single piece of cake. One bite of chocolate turns into 20 and one slice of cake turns into half a cake.

In extreme cases, after finishing what we decided to have in "moderation" we find ourselves driving to the store to buy more.



This is an "all or nothing" phenomenon that is common with addicts of all sorts. There's no such thing as "moderation" - it simply does not work.

Telling a food addict to eat junk food in moderation is like telling an alcoholic to drink beer in moderation... it's just not possible.

### **3. Eat Until Feeling Excessively "Stuffed" (Binge)**

Let's say you've given in to a craving... Now you start eating, bite after bite, until you feel full (that is, if you weren't already full when you started... see symptom #1).

But... it doesn't stop there.

You keep on eating, then you eat some more. When you finally stop, when your "urge" is satisfied, you realize you have eaten so much that you feel completely stuffed.

You may have felt good while you were eating... even a little euphoric, but when you're done you may feel very bad about yourself and even quite uncomfortable because your stomach is stuffed with food.

Perhaps you even felt a bit "out of control" while you were piling the food in your mouth. All of these are classic signs of binge eating.

### **4. Feel Guilty Afterwards, But do it Again Soon**

When we do something that we know isn't "right" – against our values, our principles or decisions we had made in good faith, we often feel bad about it.

This is called "having a guilty conscience" and is common among us human folks. It is a feeling that is both good and bad.

Good, because it means that we do give a crap. Bad, because it just feels so damn nasty when it happens. It is a horrible feeling.



For us who are overweight and have been trying to exert "willpower" and control our consumption of unhealthy foods, giving in to a craving and eating a food that we know we shouldn't eat can lead to a guilty conscience.

We may feel that we're doing something wrong, cheating on ourselves. We may feel that we are weak and undisciplined.

Often after such failed battles, we decide that **now** we're going to control ourselves. This was the last time, we now realize how bad we feel afterwards and that the memory of this feeling can give us strength that will suffice the next time a craving shows up.

Yet... we repeat the whole thing over and over again. Next time we get a craving, our memory of the guilty, disgusted feeling seems to have vanished.

## 5. Making up Excuses in Your Head

When you have decided to abstain from junk food on a particular day but a craving shows up anyway, you can imagine two forces being at play in your mind.



One of them is the logical, rational decision you had made to abstain from junk food. Perhaps you decided to only cheat on Saturdays.

But the other force is the craving... today is a Wednesday and you feel like having something sweet in the afternoon.

Right now you have an urge to have a piece of food that you had previously decided you weren't going to eat on this particular day.

The logical decision you made to abstain becomes "challenged" by the new idea... that you should indulge today and eat whatever it is that you are craving.

The thing is, both of these "forces" are in your brain. They are in your conscious mind, your thoughts.

At these moments, you start "thinking" about whether you should or should not indulge.

But if you observe closely... at these moments, it's almost as if your brain is arguing with itself. One train of thought wants to abstain, the other wants to indulge.

The force that wants you to indulge may try to come up with excuses to justify the idea that today is a good day to cheat and have whatever it is that you are craving.

At moments like these, the train of thought that wants to abstain often becomes vague, weak and easy to push away.

It can be hard to remember all the great reasons you had for abstaining (such as being overweight or having felt like crap last time you "cheated").

At the end of this "mental battle" you may have managed to convince yourself that you should cheat today. The old idea of abstaining loses to the new, much better idea of indulging today.

Samples of common excuses you might make up:

"It was a stressful day today and it will be easier to start my diet tomorrow."



“I’ve made a mistake with my diet which is causing the craving, better give in to the craving today and fix this mistake tomorrow.”

“I’m feeling a bit depressed today... having some junk food today will make me feel better.”

Whatever the excuse is, it is usually a bad one. At the moment you finish eating and the guilty conscience sets in, you realize exactly how ridiculously stupid and unwarranted the excuse was.

But at the moment the craving was doing its thing in your mind, it seemed like a great idea.

## 6. Repeated Failures at Setting Rules



When people are struggling with self-control in one way or another, they often try to set rules for themselves.

For example... to only sleep in on the weekends, always do homework right after school, never drink coffee after 2 pm. Sound familiar?

For most people, myself included, these rules almost always fail.

There are few things that are as hopeless as setting rules about eating, especially for someone who has problems with cravings.

If you are reading this, chances are that you have often tried to set rules for yourself about how you're going to control your consumption of addictive foods.

One cheat meal per week... two cheat meals per week... one cheat day, Saturday, where all bets are off... only eat junk food at parties, birthdays and holidays.

I've personally tried all of these rules, along with a dozen others.

**I failed, every time.**

## **7. Hiding Your Consumption From Others**

Eating these addictive foods is frequently accompanied by guilt and shame, some of the nastiest emotions we have in our arsenal.

People with a history of repeated failures often start hiding their consumption of junk food from others. They are embarrassed about their „weakness“ and „lack of discipline.“

They may prefer to eat alone, when no one else is at home, alone in the car or late at night after everyone else has gone to bed.

They feel ashamed of themselves. They have told their loved ones that they are going to abstain and learn to control themselves. They feel ashamed for failing their loved ones and failing themselves.

They may prefer to drive out of their way to stores in order to make sure they don't run into anyone they recognize when they are purchasing the junk food.

I used to drive to stores, buy junk food and eat it alone in the car. If I was home alone, I would eat it there... but I made sure to throw away the packaging so that no one would be able to see what I had done.

I felt ashamed of it and I didn't like the idea of my loved ones realizing how weak I was and what I was doing to myself.

## 8. Unable to Quit Despite Physical Problems

Eating too much of the wrong foods can lead to all sorts of serious physical problems.

We know that as junk food consumption has increased around the world, various “diseases of civilization” have followed.

There is no doubt that the foods we eat do have a significant impact on our physical health.

In the short term, junk food can lead to weight gain, acne, bad breath, fatigue, poor sleep, poor dental health among other problems.

But in the long term, after years and years of continued abuse to our bodies, things can really start to go wrong.

A lifetime of junk food consumption can lead to obesity, type II diabetes, heart attacks, strokes, Alzheimer’s, dementia and various types of cancers.

That’s right... junk food CAN and WILL kill you eventually.



Someone who experiences any physical problems and knows that they are directly related to their consumption of unhealthy foods, but is STILL unable to change their habits, is in serious trouble.

If you have been unable to control your consumption of junk foods despite physical problems (**obesity and weight gain are serious health problems**) then this symptom applies to you.

There is no reason to think that when your health gets worse, it will be enough to motivate you to quit. Alas, no.

Some people have very serious issues. They may be about to be amputated due to complications of diabetes but are STILL NOT able to quit... even though they KNOW that controlling their eating habits may prevent them from losing a limb.

If your health is starting to suffer then you better start digging your way out or you're going to end up even sicker.

## Food Addiction Quiz

There are 8 questions, each one with an answer on the scale of 1-5.

Read each one, give it some thought and then answer it. For each question, choose the option that fits the best out of all 5.

**1. Do you ever get cravings for certain foods, despite feeling full and having just finished a nutritious meal?**

- 1) Never.
- 2) Rarely.
- 3) Sometimes.
- 4) Frequently.
- 5) All the time.

**2. When you give in and start eating a food you were craving, do you find yourself eating much more than you intended to?**

- 1) Never.
- 2) Rarely.
- 3) Sometimes.
- 4) Frequently.
- 5) All the time.

**3. When you eat a food you were craving, do you eat to the point of feeling excessively "stuffed" (includes binge eating)?**

- 1) Never.
- 2) Rarely.
- 3) Sometimes.
- 4) Frequently.
- 5) All the time.

**4. Do you feel guilty after eating particular foods, yet find yourself eating them again soon after?**

- 1) Never.
- 2) Rarely.
- 3) Sometimes.
- 4) Frequently.
- 5) All the time.

**5. Do you make excuses in your head about why you should eat a particular food that you are craving?**

- 1) Never.
- 2) Rarely.
- 3) Sometimes.
- 4) Frequently.
- 5) All the time.

**6. Have you tried to quit eating or setting rules (includes rules about cheat meals/days) about certain foods, but been unsuccessful?**

(This includes setting rules about cheat meals and cheat days... for example only cheating on Saturdays)

- 1) Never.
- 2) Rarely.
- 3) Sometimes.
- 4) Frequently.
- 5) All the time.

**7. Do you ever hide your consumption of unhealthy foods from others?**

- 1) Never.
- 2) Rarely.
- 3) Sometimes.
- 4) Frequently.
- 5) All the time.

## 8. Do you feel unable to control your consumption of unhealthy foods, despite physical problems (includes weight gain)?

- 1) Strongly disagree.
- 2) Disagree.
- 3) Neutral.
- 4) Agree.
- 5) Strongly Agree.

Now count your score. Each question gives you a score from 1-5.

## How to Interpret The Results

The lowest possible score is 8, the highest is 40.

This quiz can not give you a yes-or-no answer about whether you are a food addict or not.

It is merely designed to get you to think about your relationship with food and whether you do have these issues.

But I'll give you a few of my thoughts on this.

Let's talk about the person who got an average score of 3 for each symptom.

This is your average person, who doesn't really have serious issues with food but may still be in trouble controlling their consumption.

This would give a score of  $8 \times 3 = 24$ .

I'm going to arbitrarily set 24 as the borderline. If you're under it, then you're under the average but may still have some issues.



If you selected #4 on average (a score of 32) then you probably do have some **serious issues** with junk foods and you can pretty easily be classified as a "food addict."

**Under 24:** Normal person, only minor issues with junk foods.

**24 - 32:** Definitely have some issues with junk foods.

**Over 32:** Probably have a serious problem with food addiction.

Put simply, if you answered #4-#5 for many of the questions, then you most likely do have a serious problem with food addiction.

But... this quiz is only arbitrary.

The only real way to know if **you** have this problem or not, is to **honestly ask yourself** this question:

*Have you repeatedly tried to quit eating or cutting back on your consumption of junk foods, but you can't?*

If you can relate to that, then sure thing - you do have a problem and you better do something about it.

Whether you are a full-blown „addict“ that fits in with medical definitions of addiction doesn't matter in my opinion. The key point here is that **deep in your heart you want to quit, but you can't.**

That's all that matters!

Food addiction is no joke... overeating, especially on junk foods high in sugar, is serious business and can lead to all sorts of diseases; heart disease, diabetes, obesity, alzheimers, premature ageing and even cancer.

But that's not what is most directly relevant to your life, today. What **IS** is that food addiction can ruin your life in other ways.

Feeling miserable about yourself, not feeling in control, having a broken self-esteem... this is serious business. You only get **ONE**



chance, ONE life... and going through life without living to your full potential is a waste.

If you feel bad about yourself, depressed, low self-esteem, etc. TODAY then you're not going to feel ANY better in 5 years, if you don't DO something about it.

If food addiction is a problem in your life, then you **MUST** act. You **MUST** get it under control. **If you don't, it will only get worse.**

**P.S.** I ran a survey about these 8 symptoms. I described the results in a blog post. Make sure to do the quiz **before** reading it:

[8 Symptoms of Food Addiction \(With Survey Results\)](#)

## Part 4 – Know Thy Enemy





Sometime in December 2010, I came home from school after 5 hours of classes.

It was a rather stressful day, we covered lots of material and there was plenty of stuff that needed to be finished at home before the next day.

I put my jacket in the closet and went into the kitchen to have a glass of water.

As I was letting the water run to let it cool down, I noticed a plate of chocolate chip cookies on the counter.

They grabbed my attention, but just for a second.

I remembered that I was on a diet and that I wasn't going to eat any sugar except on Fridays or special occasions.

Well, I got my glass of water, sat down in the living room to watch some TV and all was going well. However, after a few minutes those damned cookies suddenly popped back up into my mind.

Again, I remembered that I was going to abstain. Not today, Kris, it's a Tuesday. Better keep watching TV and forget about those cookies. You can have some in a few days.

But this time, it was pretty hard... no, impossible, for me to get the thought out of my head.

I started contemplating... maybe it isn't such a bad idea to have a cookie today.

After all, I've eaten super clean for the past two days. I could easily eat a few cookies and still be in a total calorie deficit for the week.

So... after a few minutes of thinking, I decided to have a few cookies.

What's the harm in a few, right?

Well, **big** mistake.

As soon as I had finished these several cookies, I wanted more. And despite what I had thought would happen, the craving was not satisfied by three cookies.

After I had finished three, the craving was 10 times stronger than before and I needed to eat more.

10 minutes later, the plate of cookies was empty. I probably ate about 20 of them. But the craving was still not satisfied.

I opened the fridge and the cabinets, looking for something "good" but all I found was some yogurt, breakfast cereal and vegetables, which did not seem very appetizing at that moment.

Disappointed not to find anything "good" to eat in the house, I went straight out to my car, drove to the store and bought myself a large tub of ice cream and ate all of it.

Afterwards I felt guilty, ashamed and decided that now things were going to be different. I was going to control myself from that point onward.

But of course... by the time the next craving appeared, I had completely forgotten how miserable I felt after my last „cheat.“

Rinse and repeat. I replayed this scenario over and over again for almost two years after this incident.

## Addictive, Hyper-Rewarding Foods

It is important to realize, that the fact that there were *cookies* on the counter was important.

Had it been a piece of steak, I might have had some. I might have gotten a mild craving and ended up eating it.

But the difference is... that the piece of steak wouldn't have triggered a binge. It wouldn't have made me drive to the store to buy ice cream and I wouldn't have felt ashamed and guilty after eating it.

That's because steak is a real food. It is good for me. It is a food that I have a "normal" relationship with, if you'd like to call it that.

The cookie is different. The cookie contains refined wheat flour and large amounts of sugar. When I eat the cookie, it causes overstimulation of the reward centers in my brain, just like a drug.

This makes me feel ravenous and causes me to overeat despite having made a logical, firm decision not to do so.

Steak doesn't do that. Real food does NOT cause these reactions, only processed hyper-rewarding junk foods that (usually) contain harmful and addictive ingredients like sugar and gluten.

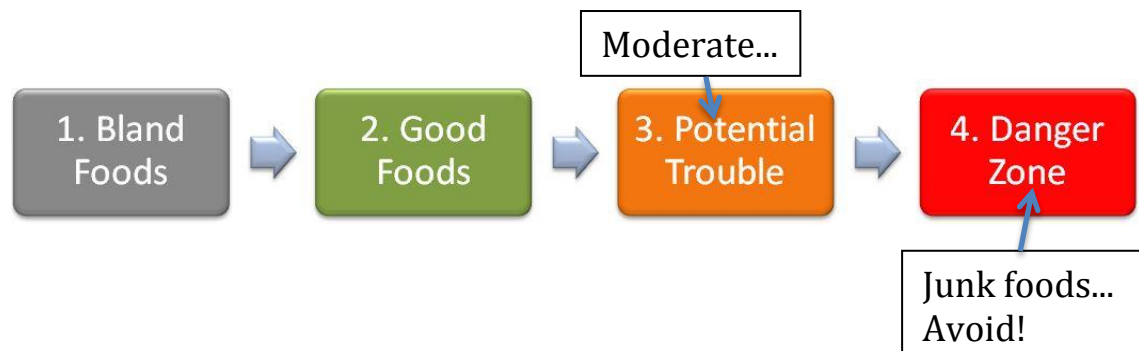
That's why "food addiction" isn't quite the right term... not for me anyway... "**junk food** addiction" is more appropriate.

## The Spectrum of Reward

Some foods taste like crap, others are bland, while some give us so much pleasure that we want to eat them over and over again.

The truth is, the pleasurable effects of food are on a spectrum and it varies greatly between individuals based on personal preference.

To simplify, I like to put foods into 4 categories: bland foods, good foods, potential troublemakers and danger zone.



**Bland foods** include foods that are pretty much unflavored. Unsweetened yogurt, meat without salt, raw spinach, etc.

**Good foods** are healthy, tasty, real foods that may be cooked, may include salt and condiments, but do not contain sugar or flour.

Steak, fruits, salads, potatoes, eggs, salted foods, etc. This is what you should be eating for the sake of optimal health.

Real, single-ingredient foods flavored with natural condiments.

**Potential troublemakers** – this category includes foods that may not be „hyper-rewarding“ but can still be problematic.

This includes peanut butter, salted popcorn, homemade cookies with natural ingredients, etc.

Some people can eat these foods without issues, others can not.

**Danger zone** – this is where the addictive, hyper-rewarding foods are.

Ice cream, pizza, donuts, hamburgers, sugar-sweetened beverages, pastries, candy bars, etc.

These foods are likely to cause cravings, binge eating and make you overeat and gain weight over the long term.

## **Danger Zone**

You need to recognize the foods you have problems with.

This varies between people. Any food that you get unnatural cravings for and you tend to binge on should be on the list.

These are the foods I choose to call "addictive foods." They are foods that cause behaviours and thought processes that are typical for addiction.

You need to be aware of these foods beforehand and it might take a bit of thought to realize exactly which foods this applies to.

But it's also important to **make the distinction** between addictive foods and other foods that you just "like."

The more healthy foods you can include in your diet, the better and the greater your chances of being able to stick to the plan will be.

This **ONLY** applies to the foods that you have severe problems with.

These are typically so-called "junk foods" that usually (not always) contain sugar and/or wheat.

Ice cream, candy, cakes, cookies, pizza, hamburgers, potato chips, french fries from take-out joints, etc.

If I personally eat anything that contains these foods, I am likely to binge, relapse and eventually gain back the weight I lost.

Of course, there is more to health than just weight loss. These junk foods ruin your health in other ways as well.

Eliminating them will not only help you overcome the junk food addiction, you will also lose weight, drastically improve both your physical and mental health and live a longer, healthier life.

## Potential Trouble

Now to the foods that don't necessarily cause massive cravings, but are still easy to overeat on.

Their effects on our behaviour aren't as strong, but they **CAN** trigger overeating.

It is important to realize that **certain real foods have this effect.**

You might fall into the trap of eating too much of them, but that does NOT mean that you have failed and you do NOT need to feel guilty about it.

I like to call these foods „domino“ foods. It’s like with domino cubes. You trip one cube (eat one bite) and the rest will follow.

Put simply, a domino food is a food that you tend to keep eating past the point of being full.

Almonds are a typical domino food for me. If I grab a handful of almonds as a snack and start eating them, one by one, I am likely to keep eating until I have eaten an enormous amount of calories.

I can easily eat a bag of nuts and still feel hungry. If I do this often, my weight loss stalls despite these foods being relatively healthy.

For me, this applies to several foods. I can have some of these as parts of recipes, but if I start eating:

Raw cheese...

Peanut butter out of the jar...

Heavy whipping cream mixed with protein powder...

Then I’m likely going to eat too much. But the effect isn’t of the same magnitude as if I had eaten pizza or ice cream.

Not even close.

This has happened several times during my abstinence period, eating “domino” foods. Each time, they stalled my weight loss a little bit because I overate, but I didn’t relapse.

It didn’t take much willpower to get back on plan the next day, or next week because sometimes I’d eat these for a few days in a row.

Recognize the difference between addictive, hyper-rewarding junk foods and domino foods.

Addictive foods are those that you absolutely **MUST** avoid or else they will quite literally take over your mind.

Domino foods are the foods you can still include in your diet but must be careful with if they tend to make you overeat.

It is common for food addicts in recovery to fall into the trap of eating domino foods to the point of stalling weight loss for a while.

Don't let it dishearten you. If it happens, stop buying these foods.

Again, don't worry, there are plenty of foods that you **CAN** eat and I will cover that in detail later on.

If you're interested in how the food industry makes foods that are so rewarding that you lose control over your consumption, then check out this clip from CBS's show 60 minutes, where they take a look inside the flavor industry:



[Watch: <http://authoritynutrition.com/junk-foods-chemical-engineers/>]



# Part 5 – The Last Resort: Complete Abstinence



Complete abstinence is the only thing that consistently works for true addicts to overcome their addiction.

True story. Moderation fails, every time.

Ask any recovering alcoholic, drug addict or smoker whether they think they would have been able to use in moderation. Most will say no.

This is how it is for smokers. One puff and you're out, right back at the starting point.



Same for alcoholics and drug addicts. It only takes a sip or a snort to relapse.

The [law of addiction](#):

**"Administration of a drug to an addict will cause reestablishment of chemical dependence upon the addictive substance."**

When your addiction is to food, the situation becomes more complicated. If you don't eat anything, you will slowly waste away and die.

Fortunately, most of us don't have problems with all foods.

There are only certain types of foods that we tend to crave and/or binge on. These are the addictive foods I described above, those in the „danger zone.“

There is NO physiological need for these foods.

It is possible to replace many of the junk foods using healthy, natural ingredients (there are some ideas about this in part 8 - "How to Live Your Life Sugar- and Gluten Free").

## Is Complete Abstinence (CA) Too Extreme?

I've consistently experienced, time and time again, that I personally can NOT handle these addictive foods. If I eat them, I tend to crave and binge on them.

Trust me, I've tried **everything**.

Appetite suppression tricks...

Various supplements...

Appetite suppressant drugs...

Tried cheating on the weekends...

Tried not cheating...  
Tried low-carb...  
Tried high-carb...  
Tried fasting...

I consider myself to be fairly skilled at using Google and finding solutions and answers to various questions. I have spent countless hours scouring the web to find a "solution" to this problem.

No matter what I tried, it failed. None of it worked!

I've come to realize that junk food is an all-or-nothing phenomenon for me. Either I eat unhealthy all the time and face the consequences, or I quit completely.

If you've had problems "eating in moderation" in the past... then perhaps you should consider complete abstinence as well.

If you are anything like me, it's either ALL or NOTHING.

Either continue the cycles of cues, cravings, rewards, binges, relapses, weight gain and feeling miserable... OR just stop it. Completely. No cheating, ever.

Not on Christmas, not on Birthdays, not on New Years eve.

Complete abstinence is the **only thing** that works for true addicts to overcome their addiction. There is NO reason this shouldn't apply to junk food addiction the same way as it does with other addictions.

I am certain that this is the only thing that can reliably save people from this problem.

Some people may be able to learn to eat in moderation again, but most will not. I am sure of it.

# 8 Reasons Not to Have Cheat Meals

If you are a food addict, like me, then you only have two choices.

1) Try to learn to eat in moderation again. Give willpower another shot and allow yourself to have cheat meals every now and then.

2) Never eat these foods again. No cheat meals, not ever.

Here are 8 reasons why #2 is the better choice.

## 1. Your Body Won't Fully Adapt to the Healthy Diet

When you drastically change the way you eat, a certain adaptation process needs to take place.

For example, if you're doing a low-carb diet, then your body needs to change certain hormones and ramp up production of enzymes to make use of fat as the primary source of fuel.

If you keep cheating, you will prevent this metabolic adaptation from ever fully completing.

Also, when you abandon the standard western diet and start eating more real foods, it can take some time for the sense of taste to adapt. With time, real foods start to taste much better.

If you cheat and eat junk foods frequently, your taste sensations won't adapt completely and you won't be able to experience the same satisfaction from real foods.

## 2. Eating Junk Foods Feeds The Addiction

If you keep having something that you're addicted to, it just keeps the addiction going. In this case, having "everything in moderation" isn't a good idea as it will be almost impossible to maintain.

If you crave junk foods all the time and keep giving in to these cravings, that will just make them even stronger. Avoid these foods completely and the cravings will diminish over time.

### **3. You Might Binge and Eat Way Too Much**

Some people (myself included) can binge like there's no tomorrow and ruin a week's worth of dieting in one sitting.

I may be an unusual case, but after one particular binge I calculated the calories in it and it turned out I had eaten 5,000 calories in one sitting.

That's two days worth of calories for a grown man and an entire week (or two) of dieting pretty much ruined.

### **4. You May Feel Guilty Afterwards**

Ever feel bloated, guilty and miserable after eating junk food?

That's pretty common, actually. I used to feel this way all the time.

The cheat meal may give you some pleasure while you are eating it, but it sure as hell won't make you feel good afterwards.

### **5. Cheating Does Not Raise Metabolism or Prevent “Starvation Mode”**

The concept of “starvation mode” is largely a myth with no real science behind it and doesn't really happen until you get to an extremely low body fat percentage.

If you're a bodybuilder on a long cut for a show, then refeeds are likely to help prevent adverse effects of dieting for too long. But even in this case, choosing healthy foods is still a better idea.

However, most people aren't preparing for a bodybuilding or fitness competition and do not need to take drastic action to boost metabolism or prevent starvation mode, whatever that means.

For healthy people trying to stay healthy or lose a bit of weight, cheat meals are unnecessary at best and may be detrimental.

If you're worried about your metabolic rate going down during a weight loss period, lift weights. This is actually proven to maintain both your metabolic rate and your muscle mass.

## **6. Junk Food is Bad For You**

Junk food is bad for you (duh) and that is probably the reason you gave it up in the first place.

Having a pizza with some ice cream once a week may not seem like a big deal compared to people who eat this crap every single day.

But eating these junk foods once a week is still clearly worse than having none at all.

## **7. Knowing That Cheating is Not an Option Makes Things Easier**

Some people think that having cheat meals or days every now and then makes sticking to a diet easier. That may actually be true for some people.

But it does NOT apply to food addicts or anyone who has started having problems with cravings and losing control over their consumption of addictive foods.

When a cheat meal is not an option, it actually makes sticking to a diet much, much easier.

## 8. These Nasty Ingredients Will Never Completely Leave Your Body

Many of the nasty ingredients in junk foods can linger in the body for a while and it takes a long time to fully recover from their effects.

If you keep eating them, they will **never** completely leave your body.

### Cheat Meals or Refeeds?

**Important:** When I say „cheat meal“ – I mean eating an addictive junk food like ice cream or pizza.

If you're trying to lose weight, eating more food than usual every now and then is absolutely fine. That's called a „refeed.“

# Part 6 – Necessary Preparation Steps



If you want to break free of food addiction, there is one inevitable decision that you will have to make. That is, the decision to stop eating the addictive foods.

In the next chapter, we will cover how to go about making that decision in a way that is likely to guarantee success.

There are some things you can do to prepare that will make the whole process easier. These are simple steps you should perform before making the decision to quit eating the addictive foods.

There are also some habits you should consider forming for the sake of achieving long term success. I have listed them in Part 8.

I recommend you find a pen and paper, or simply do this in Notepad, Word or TextEdit on your computer. It is **critical that you write this down** and useful to also print these out if you have the option.

## 1. Choose a Way of Eating That You Like

Like I've said before, this is NOT a diet book. There are no meal plans, shopping guides or portion instructions here.

This is **bigger** than a diet book. It's not about short term weight loss, but freeing yourself from the vicious eating cycle that wreaks havoc on both your physical and mental health.

Again, it's **important not to focus on losing weight** in the beginning.

But you should at least have an idea of what foods you are going to eat. This differs greatly between individuals and between cultures.

It is important that you eat foods that you LIKE and that you are familiar with.

If you don't eat meat, then don't. If you are a vegetarian or a vegan for ethical reasons, then great. If you don't like grains, then go paleo or low-carb.

Just choose a way of eating that feels natural to you.

I recommend that you try to keep your diet as similar as possible to what you're used to during the first 30 days or so (without the junk foods, obviously.)

If you try to change your entire diet at the same time you're overcoming the food addiction, then you will only be making this harder and setting yourself up for failure.

That being said, if pretty much everything you used to eat contained either sugar or wheat, then you're probably feeling pretty clueless right now.

In that case, there are some links in the resource chapter that can help you get started.

You can also find everything you need on Google.

Search for things like "vegetarian meal plan" or "vegetarian sample menu" if you're a vegetarian.

If you don't find anything and are still clueless about what to eat, send me a message on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#). I'll be glad to help.

## **2. Write a List of Sacrifices You Will Have to Make**

The second preparation step involves listing all the possible sacrifices you will have to make by permanently giving up junk food.

These should involve social situations, certain foods that you love but will not be able to eat and awkward circumstances that you might get into when you don't eat the same as other people.

The more you write here, the better.

This way, you will know what circumstances might become difficult for you so they won't come as a surprise.



Some examples of what you might write here:

- I will not be able to eat cake on birthdays.
- I will not be able to eat ice cream with my family.
- I will not be able to eat cookies on Christmas.
- Sometimes when my friends go out to eat I will be unable to join them. (**Note:** most restaurants offer alternatives that you can eat, such as chicken salads. More on this later).
- I will not be able to eat my favorite food, which is pizza.
- People will ask me dumb questions about why I don't eat certain foods.
- I will have to cook more, which is time consuming.
- I will not have the convenience of buying fast food when I'm lazy. (Note: Again, there are often healthy alternatives).
- People might be offended if I refuse to eat food at parties.

This step is critical so that you can make a truly informed decision about whether you want to give up junk food or not.

### 3. Write a List of Benefits You Will Achieve

The third step involves brainstorming all the wonderful benefits you will achieve by giving up the addictive foods.

The longer the list and the more detail it goes into, the better.

Many of us have peculiar reasons for wanting to lose weight.

Write ALL of these, no matter how vain or weird. This list is for your eyes only.

Here are a few examples. Some of these are directly caused by avoiding the junk foods and others are secondary benefits because of weight loss.



- I will live longer.
- I will have a lower risk of heart disease and cancer.
- I will lose weight.
- My skin will look better.
- I will have less acne.
- My teeth will be whiter.
- My breath will be fresher.
- I will have a lower body fat percentage.
- I will sleep better.
- I will have less fat on my butt.
- I will have less belly fat.
- I might get rid of my sleep apnea.
- My memory might improve due to better sleep.
- I might be less tired in the afternoon.
- I might have less dark circles under my eyes.
- I will look better in clothes.

The list of possible benefits can go on, and on, and on.

Write EVERYTHING you can think of and make sure to save the list to your desktop or print it out. It is a good idea to go back to this list and read it once in a while.

It can also be a useful tool to keep around and give a read if any cravings show up, it will remind you why you should not give in to the cravings.

If you want to take this to the next level and you are not embarrassed about anything, you can even print it out and keep it in an obvious place where it is impossible to miss, such as on your refrigerator.

## 4. Write Down The Foods You Will Never Eat Again

This list will be slightly different between individuals.

You should know which foods are problematic for you. These are the foods you tend to get unnatural cravings for and that you can't control yourself around, the foods in the „danger zone.“ (See Part 4)

There are two specific ingredients that should most likely be on any list. These are sugar and wheat. The case is pretty strong for both of them causing unnatural cravings and leading to addiction.

If you eliminate sugar and wheat, at the same time you are eliminating almost any type of junk food.

Consider the fact that ice cream, donuts, pizza, cookies, candies, lollypops and all of these things contain either sugar, wheat or both.

Other likely suspects you might want to eliminate include typical junk foods like processed potato chips.

**Warning:** be careful when you write this. Only list addictive foods that you absolutely **must** avoid in order to overcome the addiction.

Do not list a food just because it tastes good and that you tend to eat a lot of it when it is available. There's a big difference between foods we like and foods we are addicted to.

The more tasty and delicious foods you can include in your diet, the greater your chances are of succeeding.

What my list looks like:

- Anything with sugar or high fructose corn syrup in it.
- Anything with gluten (wheat, spelt, rye or barley) in it.
- Potato chips.

This is pretty much it. There are other foods that I wouldn't eat because I know they are unhealthy, but these are the ones I have chosen never to touch again, no matter what.

## 5. Write a List of „Fast Food“ Places That Serve Healthy Food

When we don't have time to cook, it is always good to have the option of buying „fast food.“

You may think that if you eat healthy, you won't have that luxury anymore.

But this doesn't necessarily have to be true.

If you look closely, many fast food places do offer healthy alternatives.



For example, many offer salads or chicken and you can sometimes replace fries with a baked potato or rice. At burger joints, you can get a burger without the bun.

Then there are places that serve only healthy and nutritious foods. If you look closely enough, you should find them.

I recommend that you write a list of these places. If you have trouble finding them, ask people around you if they know of any.

Also, call your favorite restaurants and fast food places and ask them if they offer healthy alternatives that do not contain the ingredients you aren't allowed to eat.

In case of annoying questions, just tell them you're allergic. Make sure to also call the places that you visit most often with your friends and family.

Knowing that they offer something healthy will prevent you from having to turn people down or being the annoying person that makes everyone have to go to some other place.

## 6. Clean Out Your Pantry

It is highly recommended that you remove the addictive foods from your home. Having them around is just asking for trouble.

It doesn't take more than the sight of something to trigger a craving and having these foods within an arm's reach is a very bad idea, at least in the beginning.

What you should remove:

All candies, chocolates, ice cream, breads, pastas, cereals, wheat flour, raw sugar, cookies, frostings, sugary drinks, etc.

Read the labels on everything. Every sauce, condiment and packaged food. You will be surprised where you will find sugar and wheat.

Even foods disguised as "health foods" may contain these nasty ingredients.

Gather these foods in a box and donate them to goodwill, give them to someone you know or just throw them out.

If you are unable to clear these foods from your home, perhaps because other family members still want to eat them, then at least put them in a cabinet that you never open.

If you're not able to see these foods, then they are less likely to tempt you.

## **If You Fail to Plan, You Plan to Fail!**

If you can write your meal plans in advance, then that will help. It doesn't have to be complicated, most people tend to eat similar things day to day and week to week.

Just write down what you are going to eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner, one week in advance.

Having a pre-determined schedule helps you avoid the "brain fog" that tends to happen when hunger sets in... and these circumstances can lead to a craving and a relapse.

I recommend doing this in the beginning, preferably at least for the first few months.

# Part 7 – Taking Action



Whether you choose the path of complete abstinence or not, you **HAVE TO** break the cycle of cues -> cravings -> rewards if you ever want to learn how to control yourself.

This can take a while but it gets easier with time.

The only way to do this is to break the connection between these behaviors. If you experience many cues without them leading to a reward, the connection will disappear eventually.

If you want to give self-control another shot, then I do recommend you set a certain amount of time that you will be abstinent, be it 30 days, 60 days or 90 days.

I personally find 30 days to be a good number, but 90 days are even better. If you can make it that long, you will start to see how wonderful it is to live without these addictive foods.

At that time, you can make a logical decision about whether this is something you want to continue for the rest of your life or not.

But as I've mentioned before, complete abstinence for life is the best choice for long-term success.

## Do NOT Try to Lose Weight in The Beginning

Breaking the food addiction is important. It is a big step and making the decision to do it can be a turning point in your life.

But it *can be* hard. There are obviously some sacrifices and it differs between individuals how difficult it is in the beginning.

For that reason, I recommend that you put weight loss on hold for a while. Even if you need to lose a lot of weight, I want you to remove that from your mind temporarily.

Breaking the food addiction is a challenge on its own. Adding hunger to the mix will make it twice as hard and drastically increase your chances of failure.

When you remove added sugars and gluten from your diet, chances are that your appetite will go down drastically. You will start to feel less hungry between meals and you won't have to snack as often.

These changes will make it very easy to eat less food. You may even feel that you could skip meals without any ill effects if you wanted to.

But just because you *can* eat a lot less, it doesn't mean you *should*.

For the first 30 days, at least, you should put weight loss on hold. Eat until fullness at every meal and don't do any experiments with intermittent fasting or meal skipping or anything like that.

Chances are that you will lose a decent amount of weight even if you eat as much as you want of healthy foods. Just don't make weight loss a priority, let it happen naturally.

When you've broken the vicious eating cycle, *then* you can start „dieting“ – although you may never have to.

## The Two Step Plan

Now that you know everything you need to know about food addiction and you have done your homework, it is time to take action.

You have some decision making to do. You can do it now, or you can postpone it until later if you feel that for some reason today is not a good day to make the decision.

If you feel motivated to take action now, then you better do it soon as motivation doesn't always last as long as we would like.

If you take action while you are motivated, you will be more likely to succeed.

The plan I'm about to describe to you is actually very simple, only two basic steps. Following these two steps is everything you need to break the food addiction.

These steps are simple, but I didn't say they were going to be easy. They do require sacrifices that may be significant to you.

Without further ado, here they are (don't do them right away):

- 1) Admit that you are powerless over junk foods and unable to control your consumption of these foods.
- 2) Make the logical, informed decision to never, ever, under any circumstances eat junk food again.

If you are familiar with the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, then the first step will seem familiar because it is essentially the same as



the first step of AA. The only difference is that alcohol is replaced with junk food.

Step 1 may seem like a small step that you can perform in your mind without much thought, but that is wrong.

This is a critical step, and I encourage you to give it some thought and then repeat it to yourself out loud.

Let's talk a bit about step 2.

You might think I'm crazy saying to never eat junk food again. What about Christmas, new years, parties, birthdays?

Well, I'm afraid I don't have any magical solution. Giving up an addictive substance requires abstaining from that substance completely.

If you are a true junk food addict, like many people are, then having a cheat meal will likely take you right back to the starting point. That is the cold, hard truth.

This is the same as with cigarettes, alcohol and narcotics. The only thing that works in the long term is complete abstinence.

Anyway, time to take the plunge...

If you are ready, take this step now and say it to yourself out loud:

1) Admit that you are powerless over junk food and unable to control your consumption of these foods.

Now pick up your two lists, the one with the sacrifices and the one with the benefits.

Compare them side by side and tell yourself that you are making an **informed, logical decision.**

These lists show that the benefits you will achieve by doing this outweigh the potential sacrifices.

Then take the next step. Say it to yourself out loud:

2) Make the informed, logical decision to never, ever, under any circumstances eat junk food again.

And that's it...

# Part 8 – How to Live Your Life Sugar- and Gluten- Free



Now that you have decided to remove the junk foods from your life, there are certain things you can do to make this whole process easier and more satisfying.

If you start living a healthier lifestyle overall, then that will multiply your chances of long-term success.

This chapter will cover how to live your life sugar- and gluten free.

## What to do if You Get a Craving

If this were a war, cravings would be the battlefield.

Cravings are your greatest enemy and in order not to succumb to their power, sometimes you must fight back.

The word „craving“ may seem fairly innocent. However, for an addict, a craving is a mental state that can ruin everything.

For alcoholics and drug addicts, cravings can lead to relapse, ruining lives and destroying families.

If you have decided to abstain from the addictive foods but find yourself with a craving, then you **MUST** fight. Cheating is **NOT** an option.

If you cheat and give in to the craving, then you will be losing the mental battle against the food addiction and will have to face the consequences.

No matter what you decide to do, complete abstinence for life or only temporarily, you **MUST** beat the cravings if you want to break the vicious eating cycle of cues, cravings and rewards.

If you give in to the craving, it will only keep the vicious cycle going.

It is important to realize that a craving is an urge that you **can not satisfy**.

You may feel that if you indulge you will be satisfying some sort of need and that you will feel better afterwards, but you won't. You will only feel bad and the craving will come back stronger next time.

However, if you manage to beat it, the craving will be weaker the next time it comes around. Every time you get a craving but manage to abstain is a small victory.

The cravings will diminish in power over time and after a few months you may not even get them anymore. This varies between individuals, it took about 1-2 months for me.

I personally find it useful to have a „mantra“ that I can repeat to myself if I get a craving or think I am about to get one.

*„If I eat this piece of food right now, the craving will come back stronger next time. If I manage to abstain, the craving will be weaker next time and eventually go away completely. This is an urge that can never truly be satisfied.“*

If you find yourself with a powerful craving and you seem on the verge of giving in, then there are a few things that you can do.

- **Take a hot shower.** This is my favorite way to get rid of a craving. Get into the shower, use hot water. Keep the water hot enough that it is on the verge of being uncomfortable, but not so hot that it burns your skin.

Linger in the shower for 5-15 minutes and let the water run over your back and shoulders. The craving should be gone by the time you step out.

- **Exercise.** Distance yourself from the addictive food and exercise. Either go for a walk, run or to the gym. Half an hour to an hour would be optimal.

By the time you're finished you will have plenty of endorphins circulating in your brain and the craving will have disappeared.

- **Eat a healthy meal.** If you get a strong craving and are even remotely hungry, eat a healthy meal. Cook something quick like eggs and vegetables and eat them.

Healthy food may not seem very palatable at the moment you are craving something like ice cream, but eat it anyway.

- **Review your pros and cons lists.** This is the perfect moment to review exactly why you decided to do this in the first place.

It can be hard to think of this in the middle of a craving, because the brain tends to get foggy at these moments.

Pick up your lists and remind yourself exactly what you are gaining and that you had made a logical decision about this in the past.

- **Call a friend.** If you have any friends that know about your struggles with the addictive foods and that are supportive, call them. Tell them that you're going through a craving and explain to them what is going on in your mind. This will help, trust me.

These methods only work if you DO them. If you get a craving, stop thinking and start doing.

It is important to realize that a craving is only temporary. If you resist, it will be gone before you know it. It may feel like a long time, but it really isn't. It feels much longer than it is.

To prevent the cravings from coming in the first place, it is important to be healthy. Eat nutritious foods, exercise, get enough sleep and don't let yourself become too stressed out.

If you live a healthy lifestyle overall, the cravings will be weaker and further between... and they may not show up at all.

## Turn Health and Nutrition Into a Hobby

You may feel motivated after reading this report. You may finally realize how big of a problem junk food addiction is in your life and you may feel passionate about quitting.

However, motivation and passion often don't last for long. For this reason, it is important to maintain your motivation by turning health and nutrition into one of your hobbies.

For this purpose, reading blogs and books is a good idea.

There are many great health and nutrition blogs out there and many excellent books (some tips on where to start in the Resources chapter).

## Start an Exercise Routine



Exercise on its own is fairly useless for weight loss. The calories burned are relatively few. It is very easy to negate an hour of exercise with a few extra bites of food.

Simply exercising without any change in diet is unlikely to produce results. That being said, I do believe that exercise is an **essential part** of being healthy.

Exercise increases muscle mass, improves health markers like cholesterol and blood glucose, slows ageing, prevents degenerative disorders and is the **best thing ever for mental wellbeing**.

If you never exercise at all, I encourage you to adopt some sort of exercise routine.

I'm not going to give you any specific guidelines here. I don't want this to feel like an obligation to you. Do whatever you are comfortable with and that you enjoy.

If you like working out in a gym, then go there a few times per week and lift heavy things. If you like walking, go for a few walks every week. If you like swimming, go swimming. Simple as that.

Do NOT make exercise your primary focus.

The number one goal is to never eat junk food again and I'm only suggesting exercise as a healthy habit to adopt in order to increase your chances of long term success.

Exercise can really help reduce cravings and makes avoiding sugar and gluten that much easier.

## Eating at Restaurants

It is actually fairly easy to turn most restaurant meals into healthy, sugar-free, gluten-free dishes.

The easiest way to avoid sugar and gluten is to simply tell the waiter that you are allergic to both. It's a white lie, but it avoids annoying questions and eye rolling.

If you're unwilling to use allergies as an excuse, then tell the waiter that you do not want any products made with gluten (wheat, spelt, rye and barley) and that you don't want any added sugars or corn syrup.

You can replace the bread with an extra salad and drink mineral water instead of soda.

Most restaurants offer a steak with potatoes and/or a chicken salad or something similar. That's a pretty good choice as long as they don't put sugar or gluten in the sauce.

## How I Survived Christmas



I managed to survive last Christmas without eating a trace of added sugar or gluten.

In my family, we eat something we call Christmas pudding which is made with white rice, cream, sugar, bananas, cinnamon and chocolate.

Making a sugar-free version was simple. We skipped the sugar and the chocolate, then used the natural low-calorie sweetener Stevia instead. It was delicious and tasted almost like the real thing.

The Christmas steak had a coating that included a little bit of sugar. What I did was to simply cut off that part of my piece and then eat the rest. Easy.

The sauce was thickened with cream instead of flour. If anything, it was even better that way.

We also made sugar-free, gluten-free ice cream that was mainly composed of fruits and some ground nuts. It was awesome.

When you encounter holidays or special events where there is usually some junk food around, then plan ahead.

If asking your host to make an alternate version of something isn't an option, then simply make something yourself and bring it with you.

## Reading Labels





You'll be surprised at the number of "health foods" that contain sugar, wheat or other nasty ingredients.

But sugar has many names. They include: sugar, sucrose, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, evaporated cane juice, agave, cane sugar, corn sweetener and syrup.

Gluten will be found as „gluten“ or „flour“ or any of the grains that contain gluten: wheat, spelt, rye, barley and the rarer varieties bulgur, semolina, frumento, durum, kamut, graham, einkorn, farina, couscous, seitan, cake flour, matzoh, matzah and matzo.

If a food contains any of these ingredients, it is best to just avoid it completely.

However, there is the possibility of allowing foods that contain these ingredients as long as they aren't among the first 5 on the list.

On labels, the ingredient that is most of is listed first, then the one that is second most of, etc. Anything after the 5th ingredient is likely to be there in only trace amounts.

Some people do fine as long as they avoid anything with sugar or gluten in the first 5 ingredients.

I prefer to just avoid these foods completely, because foods with so many ingredients usually aren't „real foods“ anyway.

So... it is best to avoid these foods completely, but if you want to include processed foods in your life and don't want to limit your options too much then stick with foods that don't have sugar or gluten among the first five ingredients.

Just be aware that if the same ingredient is listed often, then there's more of it. For example, a product might contain high fructose corn syrup, evaporated cane juice and sugar. It's ALL the same, sugar using different aliases.

The manufacturers do this to deceive people, they're hiding the real amount of sugar in their products. Do NOT eat these foods.

Whatever you do, you **HAVE TO** start reading labels. It is the only way to avoid the addictive ingredients.

## Make Cooking a Passion

It is important that you make an effort to eat **good** food that you **like**.

Whichever way of eating you choose, do your best to cook tasty meals. It is fine to eat the same few meals over and over again, but trying something new every now and then is important.

The best way to do this is to get yourself a good cookbook or simply subscribe to some recipe blogs. You'd be surprised at the massive amount of recipes you can find online, for free.

Some of them are simple, others are more complicated. It might be a good idea to set a rule that you will try one new recipe each week.

You could set a specific day, such as Saturday or Sunday, then always try a new recipe for dinner that evening.

The best way for you to find these recipes is to simply use your good friend Google.

Look for „[Insert Food Here] Recipes“ – search terms like „chicken recipes,“ „vegetarian recipes,“ etc. will reveal to you an entire world of healthy, delicious and exciting recipes.

Avoiding sugar and gluten does **NOT** mean you have to eat bland or tasteless food. When you give your taste sensations a break from hyper-rewarding junk foods, real foods start to taste much better.

Real foods can be just as tasty as the junk foods, but without the weight gain, bloat, guilty conscience and all the nasty feelings that the junk foods lead to.

## Sugar Alternatives – Sweeteners You Can Have

Obviously, eliminating added sugars will remove a lot of the sweetness from your life.

Fortunately, there are some low-calorie sweeteners that you can have if you don't want to give up sweeteners entirely.

At the top of the list is Stevia, which is a natural low-calorie sweetener.

Some people don't like the taste, but from what I've read it can vary greatly between brands and processing methods.



Some studies show that Stevia can improve glycemic control in diabetics and lower blood pressure.

Another alternative is raw, organic honey in small amounts. I've looked at the research and honey is much less bad for you than sugar.

For baking or replacing sugar in recipes, honey is a good choice, but I have to recommend that you moderate your intake as it is still unhealthy, just *less unhealthy* than added sugar and high fructose corn syrup.

If either Stevia or Raw Honey start becoming a problem for you and you start craving them like you used to crave sugar itself, then you have to remove these sweeteners completely.

I would avoid all artificial sweeteners; aspartame, splenda, acesulfame-k, cyclamate and others. Observational studies show a correlation with multiple diseases and they tend to trigger cravings.

There are so many sweeteners out there that it is literally impossible for me to cover all of them here, but send me a message on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) if you're in doubt about some sweetener.

Generally speaking: natural is good, artificial is bad. If you start becoming addicted to the sweeteners, then you're going to have to eliminate them as well.

# Part 9 – How to Deal With a Relapse



Setbacks and relapses are a natural part of overcoming addiction.

It is to be expected, although you should never use that as an excuse to fall off the wagon.

I personally „tried“ giving up sugar and gluten many times before I finally succeeded. It is a chance that I might relapse again some day, especially if I forget how hopeless my struggles were and how bad I used to feel.

If you ask people who have overcome an addiction, be it food addiction, smoking, drugs or alcohol, then chances are that they had a history of several failed attempts before they succeeded.

Of course, there are some examples of people who succeed on their first attempt, but **they are the exception, not the rule.**

## The Gluten-Free, Sugar-Free Junk Food Trap

Before we get into a full-blown relapse, I'm going to describe something I choose to call the „gluten-free, sugar-free junk food trap.“

Instead of eating sugary junk foods like donuts and ice cream again, you replace them with other „healthier junk foods“ like peanut butter or cookies made with oats and raisins instead of wheat and sugar.

Technically, they are a food that you can eat but these foods may become a major issue for some people.

I personally fell into this trap, several times. First, I started craving and bingeing on organic peanut butter. All it contained was peanuts and sea salt, relatively healthy ingredients.

But the texture, flavor and energy density of this food made it „hyper-rewarding“ to my brain and I started craving it, especially in the evening after dinner.

For about a week I would go to the store and buy a jar of peanut butter each evening and eat the entire thing. It caused me to stop losing weight and I actually gained like 5 pounds. I also felt horrible.

Lesson learned. I got back on the wagon and decided that I couldn't eat peanut butter anymore. Maybe as parts of recipes, but not on its own. I now avoid peanut butter like the plague.

I had similar issues with raw cheese. I started craving it and eating it at night.

Then I also had issues with cookies that are available at a health food store close to my home. They had oats in them with dates and orange juice to make them sweet. Technically, nothing in them was off limits but the texture and flavor caused me to have problems with them.

Then I had a similar issue with chips made of corn, salt and sunflower oil. They had a texture similar to regular chips but didn't contain sugar, gluten or any artificial ingredients. They became a problem.

Each time this happened to me, I started feeling bad and gained a bit of weight. As soon as I stopped, I felt better and lost the bit of weight I had gained.

If this happens to you and chances are that it will, then you are probably going to have to put these foods on your „to-avoid“ list.

Write them down, then tell yourself out loud that you can not control yourself around them and make a decision not to eat them again.

If you want to avoid falling into this trap, then don't eat anything that could be classified as a „treat“ outside of mealtimes, especially not if it is a food that is available in a store.

If it's something you bake yourself using healthy ingredients, or a family dessert like a fruit salad with whipped cream, then that's probably all fine.

Those are healthy treats that require effort to make and they are much less likely to cause problems with cravings and binge eating.

What I have personally decided to do is to only eat **meals**. I do not let myself get tempted to eat raw cheese or „healthy“ cookies or anything like that after a meal or between meals.

If I have to be a little hungry sometimes, then that's all good. Being a bit hungry from time to time is part of being human. If anything, feeling full and being fed all the time is unnatural.

Don't feel like a little hunger is a bad thing. It does not mean that you are not succeeding. Getting a bit hungry late at night, several hours after dinner is normal. Your body will be burning its fat stores instead.

If you find yourself constantly getting hungry between meals, then consider eating more meals in the day or more food per meal. Having some **healthy** snacks around can be a great idea as well.

Full-fat yogurt, fruit, some nuts, baby carrots, a bit of leftovers, etc. are all great ideas for snacks.

## What Does “Relapse” Even Mean?

An actual „relapse“ is fundamentally different from the gluten-free, sugar-free junk food trap. A relapse is more profound and more serious.

This phenomenon doesn't necessarily happen to everyone, but it is likely to happen to those with more advanced food addiction if they ever eat an addictive food like cake or ice cream again.

To give you an example of a relapse, I'm going to use a smoker as an example.

Someone who has smoked for years, then manages to quit for a certain amount of time, may get a craving and decide to have a puff of a cigarette some time.

What is likely to happen is that the smoker becomes addicted again and starts smoking just as much as before. It is almost inevitable.

Remember the law of addiction:

*“Administration of a drug to an addict will cause re-establishment of chemical dependence upon the addictive substance.”*

This is especially evident with drugs of abuse like nicotine, alcohol and cocaine. People who were addicted to these substances WILL relapse even if they have just a puff, a sip or a snort. That's all it takes.

This may or may not apply to your addiction to junk foods. This varies between individuals, but I am sure that this will happen for many of the people who have a history of yo-yo dieting.

Before I finally succeeded (hopefully for life), I did manage a few periods of abstinence. I managed to avoid junk food for a while, then I would get a powerful craving one day and indulge.

Then I lost control, got a craving again the next day, binged again and so forth until I had gained all the weight back and felt like crap. A total relapse into food addiction, back at the starting point.

If you are one of those people who will relapse, then one bite of ice cream, whole wheat bread or a donut might be enough to ruin everything.

One bite might turn into weeks of bingeing and 50 pounds of weight gain.

This is actually more common than you may think. People who lose a lot of weight tend to gain ALL the weight back in an incredibly short period of time. Often they end up even heavier than before.

What you need to keep in mind here is that managing a period of abstinence is not to be taken for granted.

If you manage to abstain from the addictive foods for 1, 2, 3 months or even years, that does NOT mean that you will be able to do so again if you relapse.

Many addicts of all sorts have a history of a few long periods of abstinence. Then they relapse and never manage to quit again. It is common.

Sometimes when you manage to succeed and break the vicious cycle of addiction, it is a combination of high motivation, certain circumstances in your life and being lucky.

You might not get lucky next time. You might never feel as motivated.

Being able to quit is NOT to be taken for granted. If you manage to give up junk food now and manage to abstain for some time, this might be the only chance you ever get to overcome the addiction.

If you relapse, you may **never** be able to get back on the wagon.

You may think I'm being overly dramatic, but I'm not. I've had friends who managed to remain sober for months and rebuild their lives. Then one moment of weakness ruined everything.



It happens. I don't see any reason why the same shouldn't apply to food addiction.

The reason I'm making such a big deal out of this is that I don't want you to think „cheating“ is an option... that you can just get back on the wagon next day or after Christmas. Addiction doesn't work that way.

If you have serious problems with food addiction, then cheating is simply not an option. It can cause a full-blown relapse, you may gain all the weight back (and then some) in a short amount of time and you may never be able to recover.

## How to Get Back on The Wagon

Motivation is a tricky business. It comes and goes. Some months we feel excellent and motivated to improve our lives, but then we may have a long period of feeling suboptimal and even kind of depressed.

Unfortunately, there is no reliable way to induce motivation. There is no pill that you can take to become motivated.

If you relapse, which I certainly hope you will NOT do, then you may need to find motivation in order to gain control of yourself and give up the addictive foods all over again.

In that case, I do recommend that you read this book again... start to finish. Do the preparation steps and write the lists all over again.

This isn't a magic formula for success, but it does help to follow some sort of structured plan.

Try to realize what caused you to relapse the previous time and do your best to prevent that from happening again.

# Part 10 – When to Seek Help



I sincerely hope that this book has been of use to you so far and that you will be able to overcome your issues by following the advice in it.

At least, it should have given you insight into *why* your consumption of the addictive foods feels so out of control and *why* willpower tends to fail under these circumstances.

For some people, merely having an understanding of the issue can be enough for them to take control of their eating habits.

Others will need to avoid the addictive foods for the rest of their lives. That is the path I have chosen and the one I believe to be the best option to ensure lifelong success.

But reading a book and taking action on your own isn't always enough.

People who are depressed or unable to comply with these methods despite their best intentions may need to seek help.

There is no shame in getting help. I know that I would never have been able to quit drugs without outside help.

## Dealing With Depression

Depression is extremely common today and comes in many forms.

Some people are so depressed that they can not function in life, others feel suboptimal but are still able to live fairly normal lives, go to work and hang out with friends, etc.

Eating junk food seems like a fairly natural thing to do if you're depressed. These foods release feel-good hormones and may cause momentary bliss in an otherwise bland and uninteresting life.

Even though eating these feels good in the moment, in the long term they just exacerbate the depression.

Gaining weight, feeling guilty, not to mention the harmful effects these foods have on the body and brain... it's easy to see how this can make the depression even worse.

Becoming depressed may cause someone to start overeating and overeating may cause that person to become more depressed. It is a vicious cycle.

If you are depressed, then it will be extremely hard for you to overcome the food addiction. You should do whatever you can to fight the depression and for that it is critical to seek outside help.

Depression is a **treatable** condition. There is cognitive behavioural therapy you can get from psychologists, a drug-free option that is very effective and has a lot of evidence to back it up.

There is also the option of seeing a psychiatrist and getting a prescription for an antidepressant. There are many good antidepressants out there with little, if any side effects.

If you are depressed, then DO SOMETHING about it.

Being depressed sucks and to live your life that way is a waste, especially when it is so easily treatable.

If you are clueless about where to begin, see your primary care physician to ask for advice.

## Psychological Treatment Options

You could see a psychologist to seek help for your food addiction.

It is important to realize that not all psychologists have experience working with food addicts.

Ask that you be referred to someone who is a specialist in food addiction, binge eating and/or compulsive overeating (all very similar or identical conditions).

Chances are that you will be referred to someone trained in applying Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to overcome these issues.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is very effective against various mental disorders, including depression, anxiety and food addiction.

## Psychiatrists and Drug Therapy

Psychiatrists are doctors who often aren't trained in psychological approaches like cognitive behavioural therapy.

Therefore, they will probably choose to prescribe a medication to treat the condition.

Medications can have side effects, some of them even serious and for many drugs the long-term effects are not known.

I highly recommend that you only resort to medication as a last resort and that you only use them temporarily while you're breaking the habit and the vicious cycle of cravings and rewards.

That being said, there are some medications that can be effective for binge eating and that have an excellent safety profile. These include SSRIs like Zoloft and newer drugs like Wellbutrin.

Another drug that may be effective is the anticonvulsant drug Topiramate.

Again, only resort to drug therapy as a LAST RESORT. Speak to your primary care physician or psychiatrist about your options.

## 12 Step Programs

If you can't afford to see a doctor or a psychologist, or you simply don't like the idea, then there are 12 step programs that are absolutely free and are incredibly effective for some people.

They are based on the same principles as AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) except the focus is on junk food instead of alcohol.

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is the name for these groups. To find a meeting in your area, just google „OA meeting [enter city].“

Don't be shy. Just go to the meeting and see what it's about. You won't have to speak unless you want to.

Eventually you are probably going to want to get a sponsor in the group who will show you what to do next.

## These Are Just Last Resorts

Of course, I hope that most of you will be successful simply by reading and following the advice in this book.

But if that fails, there are still many other options that can be effective. What works for one person may not work for the next and you may need to find a solution that fits with your own lifestyle.

Anyway... you have reached the end. Again, if there are any questions then feel free to send me a message on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) and I will be glad to help.

There are some resources and links to further reading in the resources chapter if you want to learn more.

Thank you for reading!

*Kris Gunnars*

# Resources And Further Reading

If you are interested in some further reading about food addiction, then I highly recommend this book by David Kessler, M.D:

[The End of Overeating - Taking Control of the Insatiable American Appetite](#)

This book explores in great detail the science behind food addiction and how the food industry takes advantage of it.

This book is a great exploration of what *causes* the problem, but his solutions about how to *solve it* personally do not appeal to me.

Some books to start with if you want to learn about healthy nutrition are: [Why We Get Fat](#) (more theoretical) and [The Primal Blueprint](#) (more practical).

I hope you want to turn health and nutrition into a hobby. In that case, here are some sites you should check out and subscribe to:

[Authority Nutrition](#) – My site... evidence-based nutrition articles.

[Diet Doctor](#) – A doctor's blog about the low-carb, high-fat diet.

[Diabetes Warrior](#) – If you're diabetic, then you MUST read this site. It may save your life.

[Mark's Daily Apple](#) – A great website about the paleo/primal lifestyle.

[Fitness Black Book](#) – A great resource on exercise and getting lean.

[Coach Calorie](#) – A website with more of a fitness point of view.

**Some great recipe blogs:**

[Health-Bent](#)

[Nom Nom Paleo](#)

[Everyday Paleo](#)

If you're a vegetarian, vegan or want to follow a different way of eating, simply use google to find blogs and websites to follow.

If you want to follow the diet that I personally think is best, then here are a few articles to get you started:

[A Low Carb Diet Meal Plan and Menu That Can Save Your Life](#)

[Top 7 Unhealthy Foods to Avoid Like The Plague](#)

[Top 9 Healthiest Foods to Eat to Lose Weight and Become Superhuman](#)

[Top 11 Biggest Lies of Mainstream Nutrition](#)

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