

End Emotional Eating: Using Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills to Cope with Difficult Emotions and Develop a Healthy Relationship to Food

By Jennifer Taitz PsyD

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If you eat to help manage your emotions, you may have discovered that it doesn't work. Once you're done eating, you might even feel worse. Eating can all too easily become a strategy for coping with depression, anxiety, boredom, stress, and anger, and a reliable reward when it's time to celebrate.

If you are ready to experience emotions without consuming them or being consumed by them, the mindfulness, acceptance, and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) skills in *End Emotional Eating* can help. This book does not focus on what or how to eat—rather, these scientifically supported skills will teach you how to manage emotions and urges gracefully, live in the present moment, learn from your feelings, and cope with distress skillfully.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*End Emotional Eating* may be the beginning for you in a new relationship with food and your feelings. Who hasn't had a craving for food that came from a sense of emptiness, anxiety, or anger? This book is filled with powerful metaphors, empowering messages, and mental and emotional exercises that will keep you from eating away at your feelings. Accessible, intelligent, and compassionate, this book can help you find a new way of experiencing and using emotions. You will find wisdom that you can use every day. I highly recommend this book."

—Robert L. Leahy, PhD, founder and director of the American Institute for Cognitive Therapy, professor at Weill Cornell Medical College and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, and past president of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies.

"If you struggle with emotional eating and want to end the battle, this is the place to start. Based on solid scientific evidence, the author offers carefully selected, elegantly described, bite-sized techniques to release oneself from every aspect of the emotional eating cycle. The author did the work for us in this impressive, comprehensive work, and now we just need to begin. I highly recommend this book to anyone who seeks freedom from unhealthy eating habits and those who care for them."

—Christopher Germer, PhD, author of *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion* and clinical instructor at Harvard Medical School

"It's a pleasure to see a book with a genuinely new perspective to offer the countless individuals who struggle and suffer over the simple daily act of eating. Well-grounded in scientific research, yet also written in a lively, accessible manner with moving personal stories and plenty of specific, explicit, practical advice, Jennifer L. Taitz offers plenty of new food for thought about food. This will be a helpful and valuable read for anyone who has let his or her eating be guided more by emotion than nutrition."

—Roy F. Baumeister, PhD, author of *Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength*

"I have spent my entire career educating people about what to eat to maintain a healthy weight. But if there is one thing I have learned, it is that most people who struggle with their weight are not simply hungrier than their thinner peers. They eat for reasons other than hunger: sadness, loneliness, anger, and frustration. Emotional eating is often at the core of the poor choices people make when it comes to food. Jennifer L. Taitz has made a major contribution to helping those who suffer from emotional eating. She identifies the

basic emotions that give rise to unhealthy eating habits and offers readers the skills and tools to end emotional eating once and for all."

—Tanya Zuckerbrot, MS, RD, founder of F-Factor and author of *The F-Factor Diet*

"Why do we eat? Seems obvious, right? —Because we have to eat to stay alive! But many of us eat to feel better. We eat to push away feelings of anxiety, sadness, and self-loathing. Jennifer L. Taitz can help us stop. Her book, *End Emotional Eating*, helps us understand the link between emotions and eating. More importantly, it helps us break those links so that we have more healthy ways to regulate our emotions and so that our eating is not driven by our emotional state. The strategies taught in this book are innovative and powerful, and they have been shown to truly help people end emotional eating."

—Susan Nolen-Hoeksema, PhD, professor of psychology at Yale University and author of *Women Who Think Too Much* and *Eating, Drinking, Overthinking*

"Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) is an effective treatment for a variety of psychological disorders. Never before has the wisdom of DBT, as it applies to emotional eating, been so clearly articulated. Authored by a master clinician and talented writer, this book artfully describes how to transform your relationship with food and life. I highly recommend that you read this book if you want to gain a new perspective on your emotional reactions and change the way you think about and respond to impulses to eat. This is not a diet book; it is a book that will provide nourishment for your soul and psyche. A genuine treat!"

—Dennis Greenberger, PhD, director of the Anxiety and Depression Center in Newport Beach, CA, and coauthor of *Mind Over Mood*

"Jennifer L. Taitz's insight, compassion, and far-reaching clinical experience shine from every page."

—Sharon Salzberg, author of *Real Happiness: The Power of Meditation*

"This is not a weight loss book. It is something much, much better. If you have tried over and over to control your weight and your eating, maybe it is time to let go of that agenda. This is a book about changing your fundamental relationship with food and eating, and importantly, your relationship to yourself! Imagine that you could come into a gentler, more compassionate relationship with yourself and with eating. If you want to explore a kinder approach, this is the book for you."

—Kelly G. Wilson, PhD, cofounder of acceptance and commitment therapy and associate professor at the University of Mississippi

“Highly recommended. *End Emotional Eating* provides a sensitive and thoughtful account of how emotions and eating become entangled in a multitude of unhelpful ways, together with clear guidance for unraveling them and moving forward using a blend of ancient and modern approaches."

—Christopher G. Fairburn, MD, professor of psychiatry at the University of Oxford and author of *Overcoming Binge Eating*

About the Author

Jennifer L. Taitz, PsyD, is a clinical psychologist and director of the dialectical behavior therapy program at the American Institute for Cognitive Therapy in New York, NY. She is a certified diplomate of the Academy of Cognitive Therapy and is a founding board member of the New York City Association for Contextual Behavior Science. Her expertise lies in emphasizing simultaneous acceptance and change and providing tangible tools to help people get “unstuck” so they are better able to regulate their emotions. She has presented at conferences internationally on mindfulness and acceptance. Visit her online at drjennytaitz.com.

Foreword writer **Debra L. Safer, MD**, is codirector of the Stanford Adult Eating and Weight Disorders Clinic and coauthor of *Dialectical Behavior Therapy for Binge Eating and Bulimia*. Her clinical interests include working with patients who struggle with eating disorders and obesity, designing interventions for post-bariatric surgery patients, and using computer-assisted therapies to increase the dissemination of evidence-based treatments for eating disorders.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Audrey Stockman:

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