

## Welcome - This is **Cup of Sunshine** – your Friday Podcast brought to you by the Phoenix Centre Team of the Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg.

Welcome back! I'm Dr. Ursula Froschauer and in today's 'Cup of Sunshine' I'm going to speak to you about **comfort eating during lockdown**.



I've heard from a number of people how over the past few weeks, pants have been getting tighter and bellies have been getting bigger. I totally get this! We're not in our pre-lockdown everyday routines and when we're bored or are procrastinating it's easy to stroll to the kitchen to check if the contents of the fridge has magically changed since the last time we checked...10 minutes ago. You may not even be hungry, but it can feel like eating something beats doing the work that's piling up. This is where it can be really helpful to plan structured mealtimes during the day. Having set times when you eat breakfast, lunch and dinner could be helpful to create a structure in your day and it can help you limit your eating to when it is necessary. Spend time thinking about what healthy meals and snacks you can create for yourself for the day. In this way you'll be less likely to consistently eat unhealthy meals. For some people it might be helpful to plan meals in the evenings for the day ahead. This will help reduce time spent in the kitchen during the work day and it can help to minimise opportunities to eat mindlessly.

A trick that could help is to buy lots of fresh fruit and vegetables when you do your shopping. Most of us don't like throwing food out, so if you have a lot of fresh produce at home you'll be more likely to eat it before it goes off. With a fruit bowl filled with apples, pears, bananas, pawpaw, pineapple, oranges and grapefruit you'll be tempted to have healthier snacks.

When it comes to how we eat and what we eat we are all unique. Some people do well with intermittent fasting, while others experience major dips in their blood sugar levels if they skip a meal. Some people feel better when they restrict carbs others can't seem to feel satiated without carbs. We are all different and learning about what does and doesn't work for us is important for us to feel at our best. We need to remember that what we eat affects how we feel.

Be aware that we can derive a huge sense of comfort from eating. Just think of how a baby is soothed by being fed. Similarly, we might try to soothe ourselves through eating, especially during these uncertain times of Covid-19. When you do this, think about what feeling you are trying to rid yourself of? Is it frustration? Anger? Sadness? Boredom? Anxiety? You can also take note of your comfort food of choice. Are you grabbing something soothing and soft like chocolate or peanut butter? Are you biting on something hard to let out your frustration like nuts or biltong? Noticing your food of choice and how you eat it can tell you a lot about how you are feeling and what you need in those moments. Perhaps a hug from a family member, a chat with a friend or simply taking a few deep breaths could be helpful to regulate your emotions.

For the next week I want to encourage you to ask yourself 3 questions before you eat:

- Am I hungry?
- Am I choosing to eat this, because I am trying to avoid doing or feeling something?
- Is this a meal that is going to nourish my body and keep me healthy?

If we can give ourselves the opportunity to think before we eat, then we give ourselves the opportunity to make healthier choices for ourselves.

That's all for today. I hope you'll join us next week for more helpful hints and tips for managing life during the times of Covid-19.