

3 WAYS TO COPE WITH CRAVINGS



TIP #1



The Marshmallow Method is a technique which I named after the famous Stanford delay of gratification studies by Walter Mischel. Young children were given this option—eat one marshmallow now or wait until the researchers came back and they have two marshmallows instead. If you're able to slow down your first response to "I want to eat that," sometimes the craving passes or cools down. Try placing mints into your pocket. Pop one into your mouth. Make a deal with yourself. If you still want more food after the entire mint has dissolved in your mouth, have it. You may be surprised that the urge passes if you wait just a few minutes. The mint helps to gauge the time -- which at first can feel like an eternity.

TIP #2



Cool down cravings by "reframing your craving." In the famous marshmallow studies, teaching kids to imagine that marshmallows had the texture of clouds -- or to imagine that the marshmallow was just a picture that had a frame around it -- helped the kids wait. You can use the same approach. Imagine that your dessert is a different texture or flavor (think of whipped cream like shaving cream, for example, or cold French fries).

TIP #3



According to the elaborate intrusion theory, your thoughts can either pump up your desire for good food or cool off your cravings. When you notice yourself daydreaming about chocolate or mac and cheese, steer your thoughts toward a neutral item like a picture on the wall or an object on your desk. For two minutes, take note of the color and shape. This activity blocks the available sensory input that your brain can process -- it can only imagine one thing at a time. Don't forget, your mind is one of the very best tools you have for changing intention into action.

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by Susan Albers @2013