




MINDFUL EATING

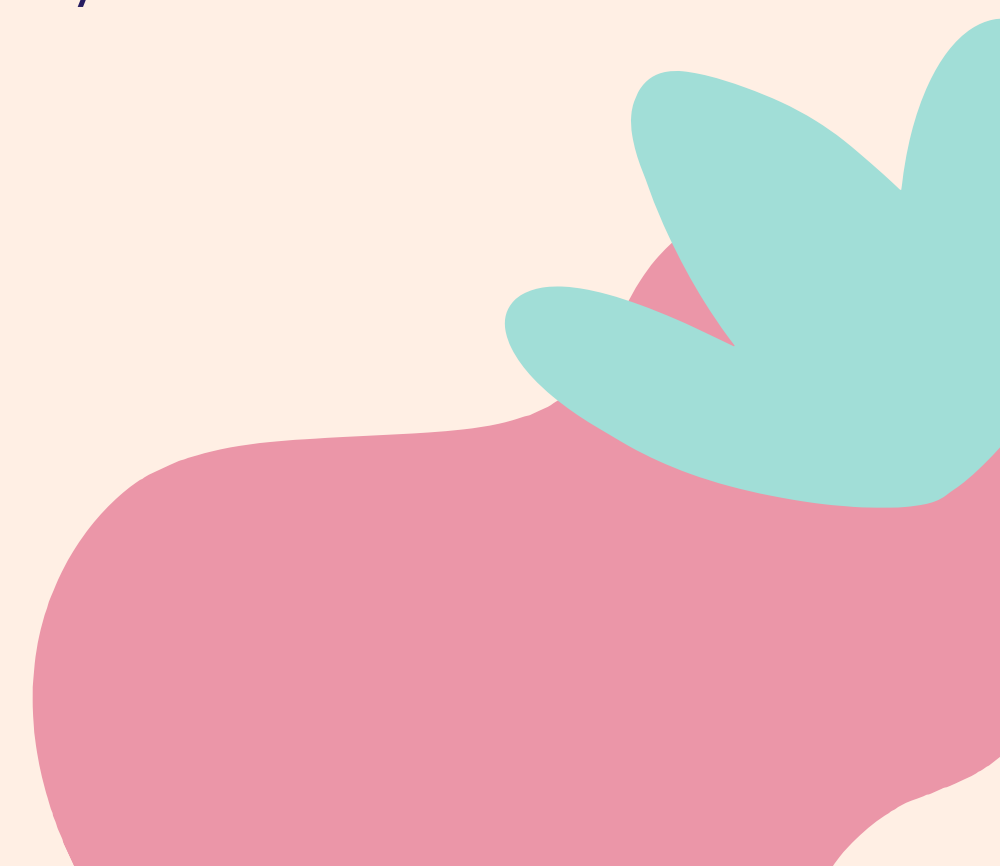
Blessing Bariatric Institute
Online Modules



INTRODUCTION

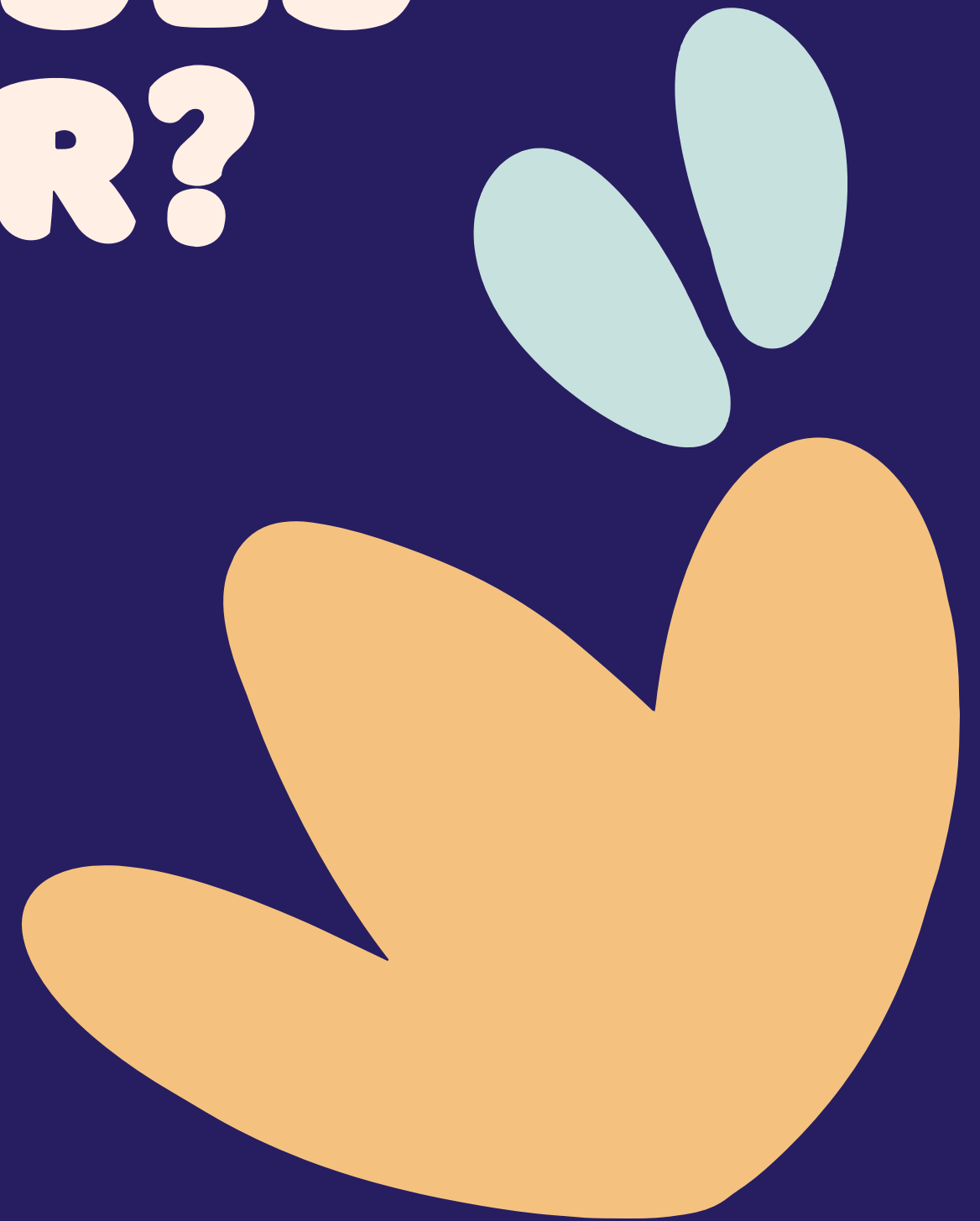
Welcome to this self-paced education module based on cognitive behavioral therapy concepts and the book “The Beck Diet Solution” by Judith Beck Ph.D. These strategies will help you manage thoughts and behaviors as you progress in your health journey.

Feel free to have a notebook or some paper nearby to jot down any notes or questions you may have as you go through this module. Bring any questions with you to your next appointment with the dietitian or social worker.



DO THESE PHRASES SOUND FAMILIAR?

- I know I shouldn't eat this, but I don't care
- It's okay if I eat this just once
- I have had such a hard day, I deserve to eat this
- I can't resist this food
- I am upset, I have to eat
- I ate something I shouldn't so I might as well blow my diet for the rest of the day
- This is hard, I don't want to keep dieting
- I will never lose weight

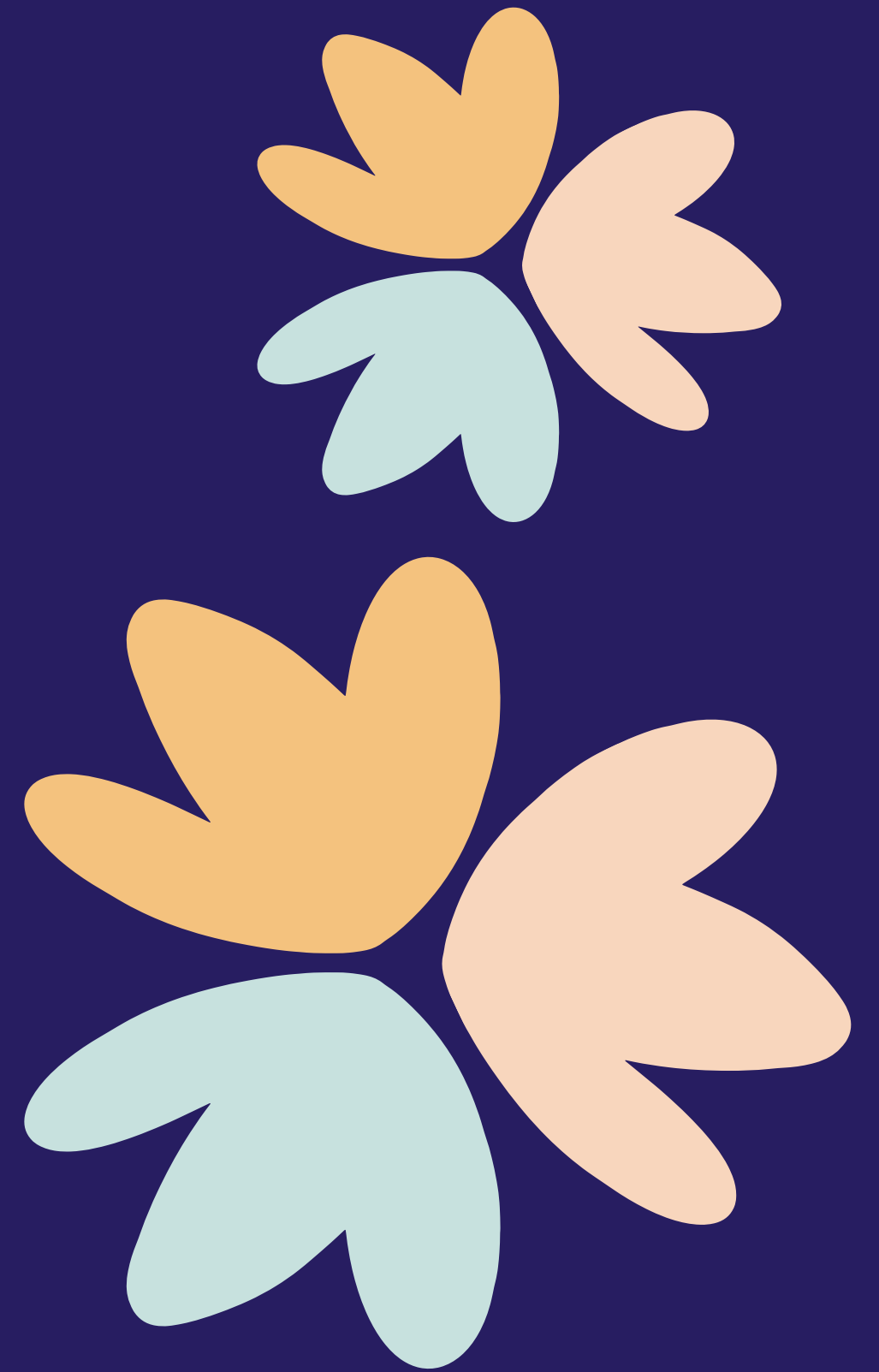


NO MORE “CHEATING”

Use the terms “unplanned eating” and “overeating”.
Beck Diet Solution is based on Cognitive Therapy - this helps identify sabotaging thinking and effectively respond to it. The way you think about food, eating, and dieting affects your behavior and how you feel emotionally.

BEING SUCCESSFUL IN WEIGHT LOSS AND KEEPING IT OFF MEANS YOU WILL HAVE TO PROBLEM SOLVE THE FOLLOWING:

- feeling overwhelmed by the requirements of healthy eating
- feeling as if you are deprived
- feeling discouraged when you don't lose weight consistently
- feeling stressed by other life problems



CRUCIAL FACTORS FOR WEIGHT LOSS SUCCESS

- Choose a nutritious eating plan that nourishes you and not restricts you
- Create the time and energy for implementing this eating plan
- Plan what and when you are going to eat
- Seek support or have a good support system to turn to
- Deal with disappointment or adjust your goals to be more realistic
- View overeating as a temporary problem that you can solve
- Cope with hunger and cravings
- Eliminate emotional eating
- Give yourself credit/celebrate successes



WHAT REALLY MAKES YOU EAT?

Eating is not automatic like it is with breathing. You may not be conscious of it, but you always have a thought before you eat. Thoughts that lead you to act in unhelpful ways are **sabotaging** thoughts.

Sabotaging Thoughts:

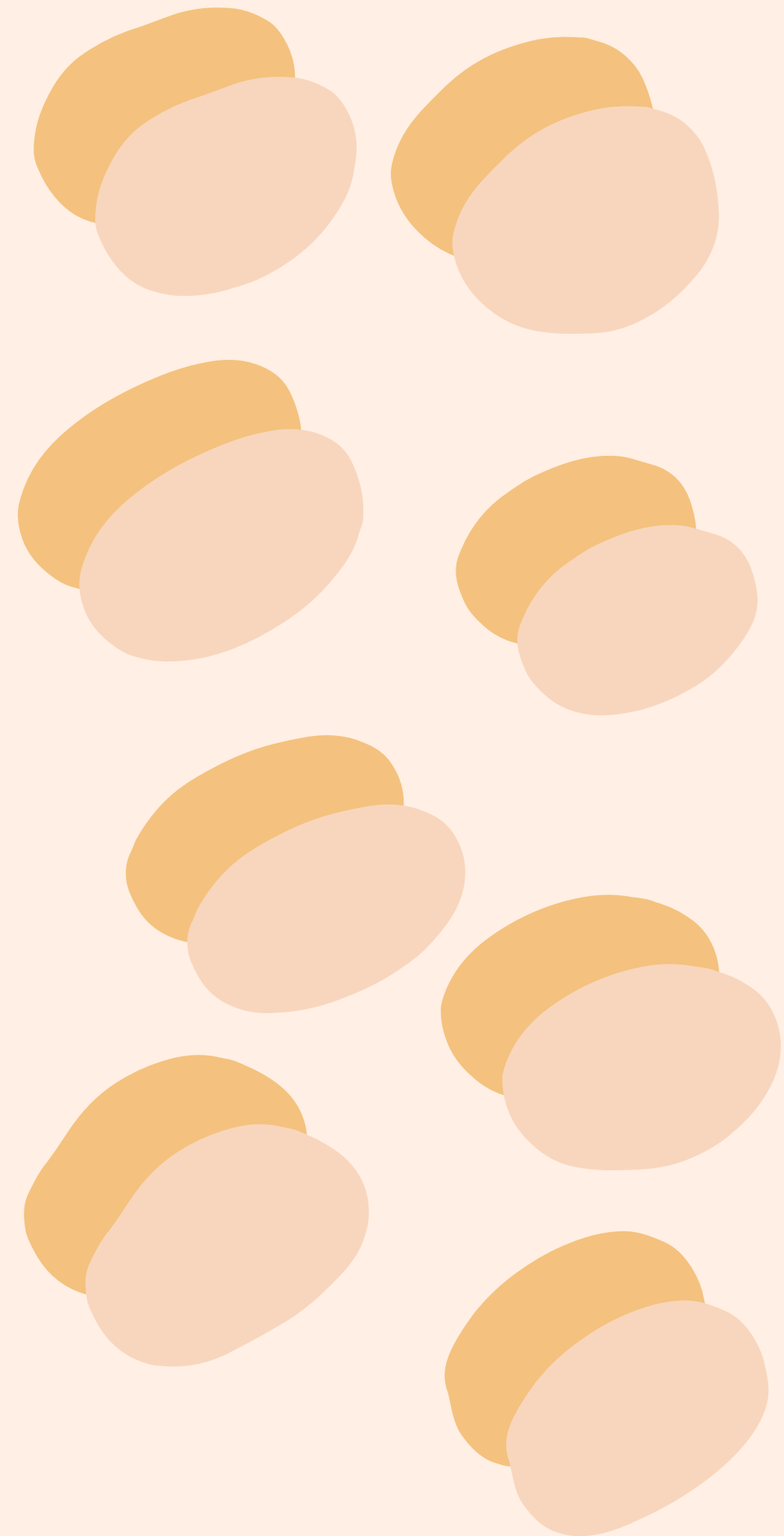
- Encourage you to eat - permission giving thoughts allow you to rationalize what you eat
- Undermine your confidence - resistance muscle or giving in muscle
- Disregard information provided through this education
- Increase general stress level

EATING BEGINS WITH A TRIGGER

- Biological trigger - hunger pains, thirst, hormones
- Environmental trigger - seeing, smelling, watching TV/commercials about food, billboards, etc
- Mental trigger - thinking about food, reading a description of food, recalling something you enjoyed
- Emotional trigger - unpleasant feelings such as boredom, fear, sadness, anger, and frustration
- Social trigger - people who urge you to eat or situations in which you feel like you can't eat like everyone else and want to

CHARACTERISTICS THAT INFLUENCE EATING HABITS

- You confuse hunger with the desire to eat
- You have low tolerance for hunger and cravings
- You like the feeling of being full
- You fool yourself about eating too much
- You comfort yourself with food
- You feel hopeless and helpless when you gain weight
- You focus on issues of unfairness
- You stop paying attention when you lose weight






READY? LET'S GET STARTED

Getting ready with learning cognitive techniques to prepare mind and environment for healthy eating. Talking back to sabotaging thoughts is essential! You will develop skills to do this. You will need support, practice, time, energy, and the right mindset.

How to motivate ourselves (optional activity):

Make a response card listing the advantages for losing weight for you, then

1. Read card at least twice daily at set times, have ready when needed
 2. Whenever you find yourself struggling with cravings, temptation, and sabotaging thoughts, read your card!
- 



GIVE YOURSELF CREDIT

1. Create a "credit account" - for every time that you acknowledge a positive behavior, drop a coin/dollar into a special container
2. Make a note in your notebook if you were having a struggle
3. Review and acknowledge what you have done each day/week

If you make a mistake in your eating, do NOT be too critical. This will impact your confidence. Instead, tell yourself "This is hard, but I will get better at this with practice. Next time, I will....".

EAT SLOWLY AND MINDFULLY

- When eating slowly, you give your brain time to register that it is full
- When you notice and enjoy every mouthful, you feel more satisfied at the end of a meal


How to Slow Down:

- Take a break after every bite or put your fork down after every bite before picking it back up again
- Eat more hot/warm foods as blowing on it each bite will force you to slow down
- Keep any eye on the clock, set a timer if desired so that meals take at least 15-30 minutes





OTHER TIPS

- Remove temptations from your house/office
 - Eat in a relaxed atmosphere
 - Focus intently on your food at meals
 - Train yourself to eat with minimal distractions
 - Inform your family and friends that you are planning on making changes to your diet, ask for support or help with making changes
 - Find a health coach or life coach for additional support - this is someone that can help you build your self-confidence, keep you motivated, help you problem solve, and keep you accountable
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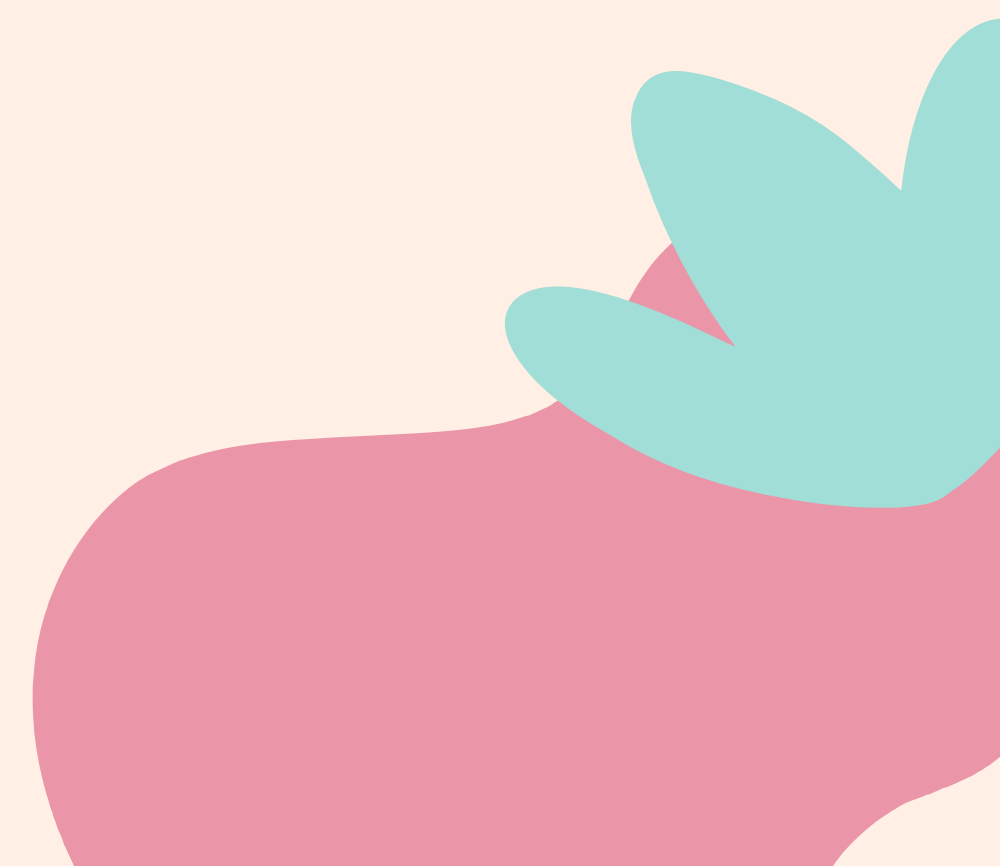


SECTION 2

Take a break, review what you have learned, then move on to
section 2 of Mindful Eating!



CREATE TIME AND ENERGY

- Plan your meals ahead of time
 - Shop for food you will need
 - Prepare your meals for the day/week
 - Sit down and eat meals slowly
 - Make time for exercise/movement
 - Complete and check off tasks on to-do lists
- 

TOOLS

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONTUEWEDTHUFRISSATSUN

6:00

7:00

8:00

9:00

10:00

11:00

12:00

1:00

2:00

3:00

4:00

5:00

6:00

7:00

8:00

9:00

10:00

11:00

12:00

Make a
schedule



Make a priority chart (or priority matrix) - write out what needs to get done first and what can be done later, also tasks can be passed on to someone else or saved for another day



	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	<div>DO</div> <div>If a task is urgent and important, prioritize it. This is your highest priority task.</div>	<div>SCHEDULE</div> <div>If a task is important but not urgent, schedule a time to get it done.</div>
Not Important	<div>DELEGATE</div> <div>If a task does not require your input but does need to be done, delegate it.</div>	<div>DELETE</div> <div>If a task is neither urgent nor important, it should be deleted and removed from your plate.</div>

CREATE AN EXERCISE PLAN

Exercise

- helps you stick with your diet
- might help control appetite
- boosts mood and soothes stress
- burns calories
- preserves muscle tissue
- builds confidence
- makes you feel better physically
- improves your health and prevents disease

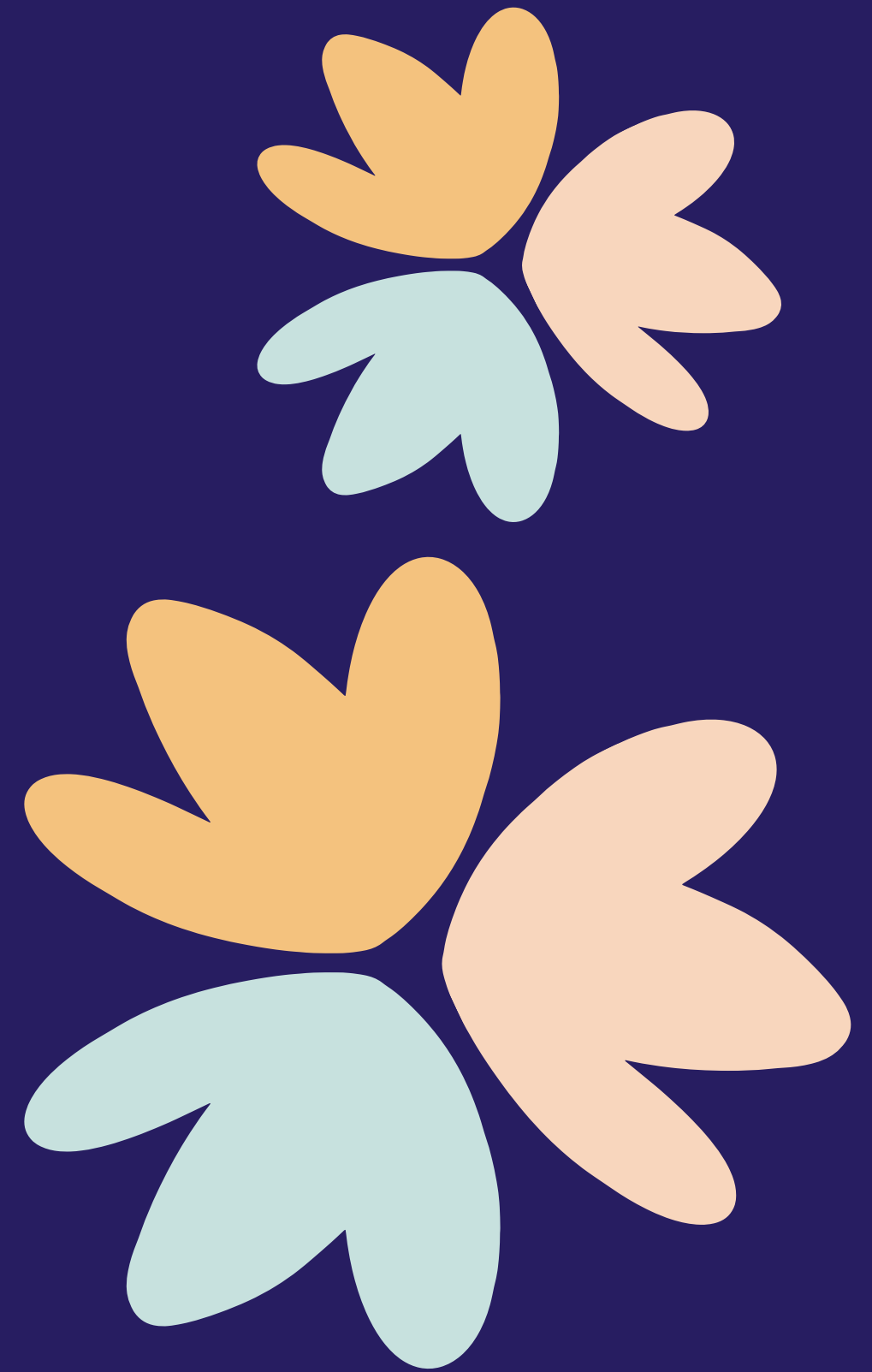
TYPES OF EXERCISE

Spontaneous - taking advantage of situations you are in to get more exercise

- taking stairs over the elevator
- parking further away in parking lots
- walking a lap at the mall before shopping

Planned - setting up specific time to do exercise

- Taking a daily walk, run, or jog
- Going to a gym or recreation center
- Swimming, water aerobics class
- Exercise classes (zumba, yoga, kickboxing, etc)
- Exercise videos at home
- Hiring a personal trainer for weekly sessions



SET REALISTIC GOALS

What is your goal?

- to get to a certain weight?
- to fit into a particular size?
- to look the way you did when you were younger?

Goals should be SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound to maximize the chance of success.

It is important to set a long term and short-term goal - write them down!
When accomplished, celebrate in a non-food related way.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HUNGER, DESIRE, AND CRAVING

Hunger - when you have fasted for several hours and your stomach is empty

Desire - not being particularly hungry but eating because there is food around

Craving - a physiological and emotionally intense urge to eat

Example:

- You hadn't eaten for many hours and felt ravenous. That sensation in your stomach, often times rumbling, is hunger.
- You ate a big meal but still wanted to eat dessert. That is desire.
- You had a very strong urge to eat, which was accompanied by a feeling of tension and an unpleasant yearning sensation in your mouth, throat, or body. That was a craving.

TRY TO NOTICE

Before sitting down for meal, notice how your stomach feels.
Halfway through the meal notice how your stomach feels.
Rate your hunger once you've finished eating.

Use your notebook to make a note on a scale of 0-10 for each
of these moments.

**If it has been anywhere from 20 minutes up to 3 hours since you've
eaten a reasonable sized meal, remind yourself that any urge to eat is
probably due to a desire to eat and not actual hunger.

Hunger Scale Chart

1	FEELING FAINT WITH HUNGER
2	ABSOLUTELY STARVING
3	FAIRLY HUNGRY
4	
5	WHERE YOU WANT TO BE
6	
7	FULL
8	EXTREMELY FULL
9	BLOATED
10	NOT HUNGRY AT ALL

If you score 1 or 2
you exhibit
extreme hunger.
When you eat at this
level, take it slowly.

If you register 4, 5 or
6, you're
probably quite hungry
so its time to eat.

If you register 7 or
above, you are more
than likely not hungry.
What do you really
want?

PRACTICE HUNGER TOLERANCE


Sometimes anxiety increases with the thought of being hungry -

- Can feel like an emergency to be hungry
- Learning to tolerate hunger pains is very important - not feeling like you have to respond immediately by eating and learning hunger pains can subside
- You don't always have to eat when you are hungry. Just because you want to eat does not mean you should always





OVERCOME CRAVINGS

- A craving is a very strong urge to eat, which is accompanied by a feeling of tension and an unpleasant yearning sensation in your mouth, throat, or body
 - When you stop or limit eating the foods you crave regularly, your cravings will diminish significantly
 - To weaken the intensity or reduce the frequency of cravings - you have to stop giving in to them - flexing the resistance muscle
 - Waiting out a craving increases your ability to tolerate cravings and increase your confidence to do so
 - Discovering you can tolerate cravings is one of the MOST important things you need to learn to lose weight and keep it off
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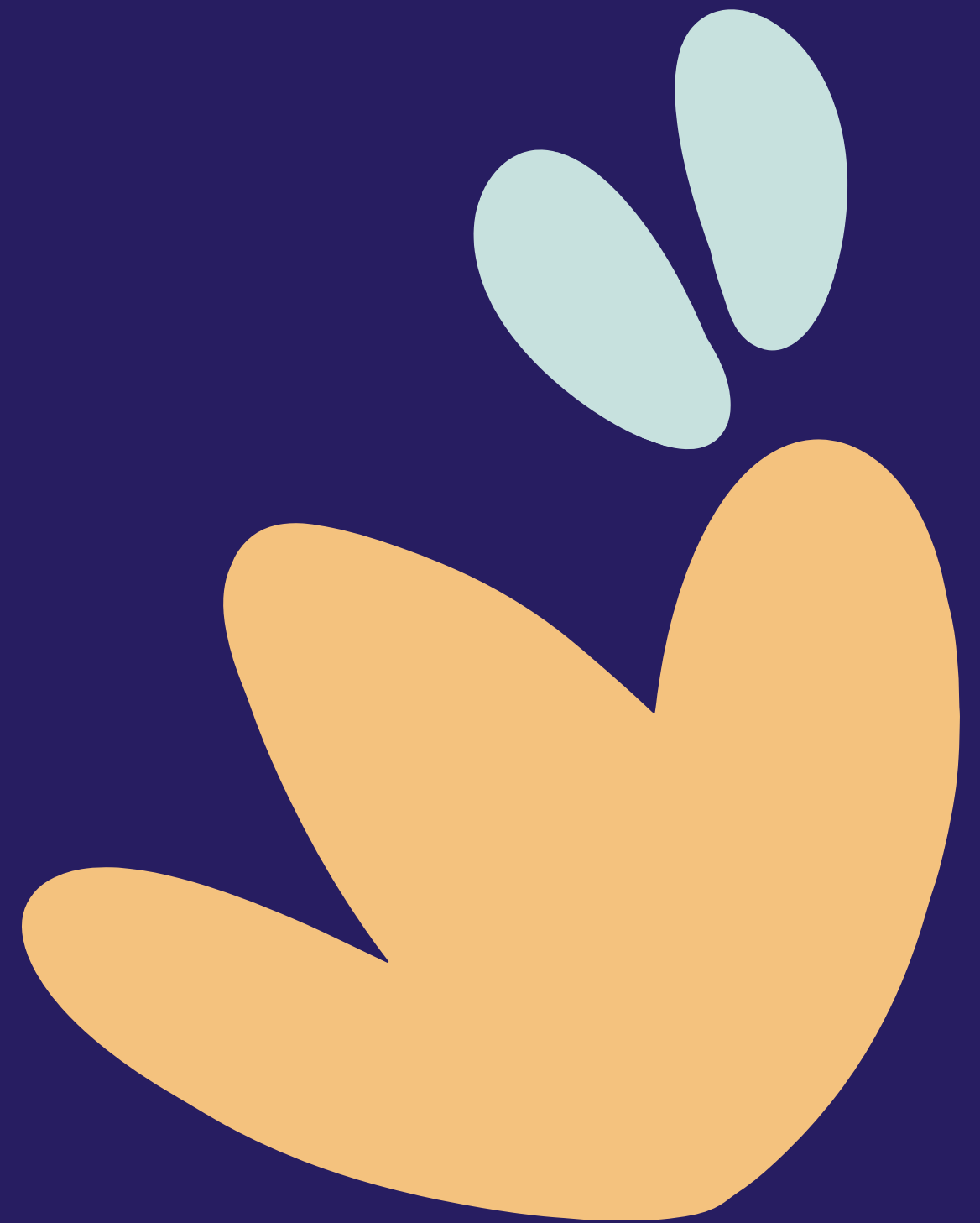
HOW TO MEASURE YOUR CRAVINGS

Use a notebook to record

- how long your craving lasted
- how uncomfortable it is on the discomfort scale of (0-10)
- which anti-craving technique you used

ANTI CRAVING STRATEGIES

1. Label it - tell yourself, "this feeling is just a craving... it's uncomfortable and intense but it's not an emergency"
2. Stand firm - you are absolutely not going to eat the food you are craving, don't strengthen the "giving in" muscle and weaken the "resistance" muscle
3. Don't give yourself a choice - the emotionally painful part about a craving is the struggle you feel
4. Imagine the aftermath of giving in
5. Remind yourself WHY you want to learn to withstand cravings



BEHAVIORAL TECHNIQUES

- Distance yourself from the food you crave - either remove it from your environment or distance yourself
- Drink a no or low-calorie beverage
- Relax - deep breathing, meditation, or relaxing music
- Distract yourself

Remind yourself, NO CHOICE - with practice, the craving intensity and times will diminish

PLAN FOR TOMORROW

Planning helps:

- Think about how you're going to get and prepare food on your eating plan
- Remember what you're supposed to eat and when
- Eliminate spontaneous eating
- Tolerate occasional hunger and cravings and learn that you can withstand them
- Make decisions about eating before you encounter triggers

Write in your notebook: When I have a craving, I'll....



MONITOR YOUR EATING

- Follow your food plan - have it in writing!
- Monitor your eating
- Give yourself credit every single time you stick to your plan
- Respond to sabotaging thoughts if you eat something you shouldn't

Plan and monitor your eating in writing every day. Make a commitment to write down everything you are going to eat for one week - then decide to commit to another week.

PREVENT UNPLANNED EATING



I really want to eat this. But I know I shouldn't. But I really want it. I'm not supposed to have it. But I feel like having it! I know it's not on my food plan, but I don't care. I'm going to have it anyway.

- A written food plan will help you make your decision ahead of time **before** you're confronted with uncomfortable cravings and tension
- Think about rules already in your life that you follow - example, brushing your teeth - no choice or excessive thought, just **DO IT**

Question for your notebook: When I feel like eating in an unplanned way, I will.....

END OVEREATING

Qualifies as overeating

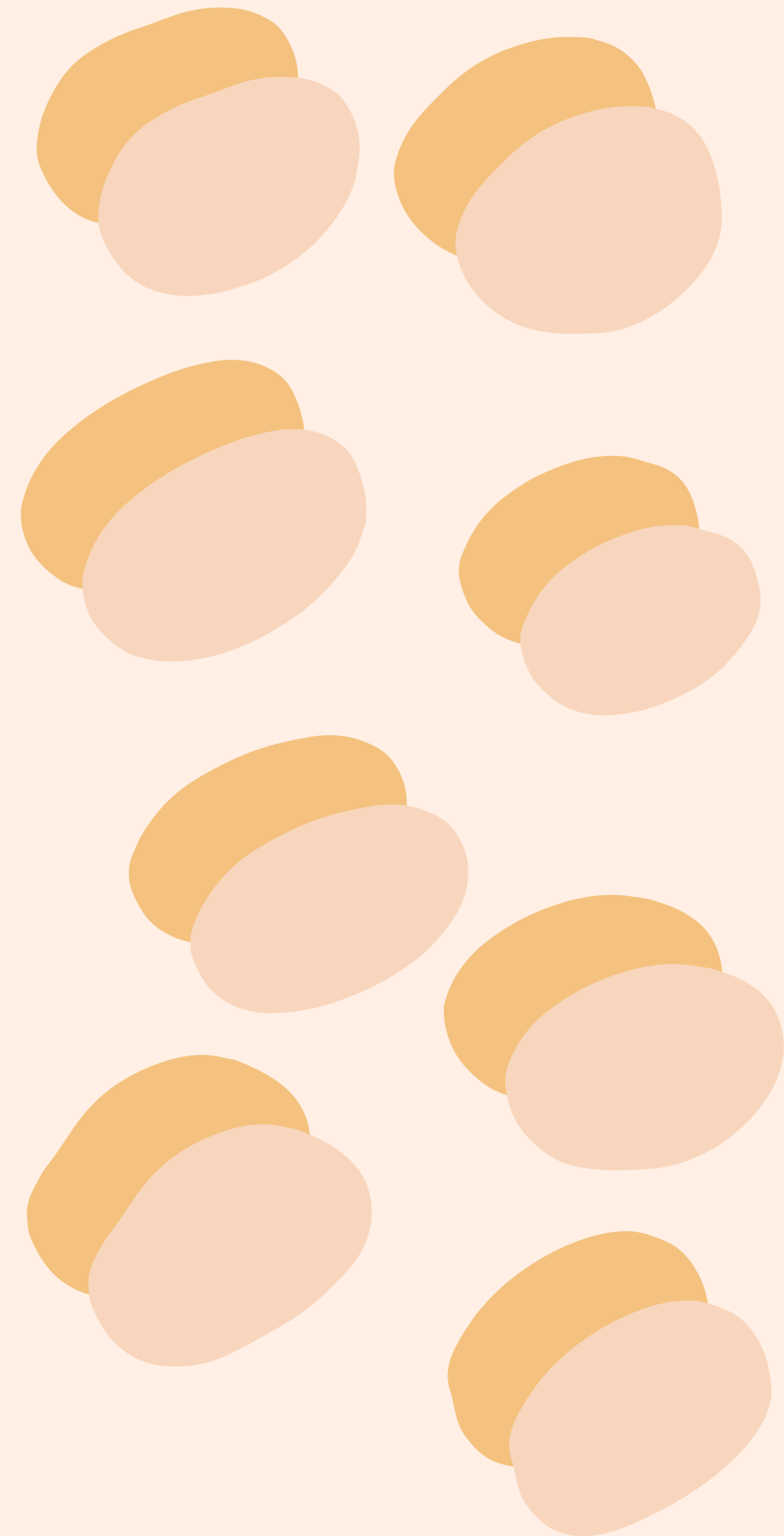
- If you eat any food in greater quantity than you had planned
- If you feel full partway through your meal but continue to eat

Determine a day to practice not overeating -

- You choose a food that you're not supposed to eat and put it on your plate. At the beginning of the meal, push the extra portions to the side on your plate. Then eat only the food on your food plan
- Throw the extra food in the trash - hard to do
- Remember the extra food will either go to waste in our body or go to waste in the garbage can

CHANGE YOUR DEFINITION OF FULL

- A way to consider if you have overeaten – think about how easy it would be to take a walk at a moderate to brisk pace before you eat. You should be able to walk at the same pace just as easily after a meal
- If you can't easily take a moderate to brisk walk after a meal, it means that you have eaten too much and might have an unrealistic definition of fullness
- To lose excess weight and keep it off, we must break the connection between overfullness and normal fullness






STOP FOOLING YOURSELF

We have an ability to fool ourselves about food and eating habits – giving ourselves fake reasons to eat. It's okay to eat this because....

- It's not a whole piece
- I'll eat it only this one time
- It's not that fattening
- I'll make up for it by eating less later
- It won't matter
- I paid for it
- It will go to waste
- I will dissappoint someone if I don't
- Everyone else is eating it
- It's just the crumbs
- It's free
- I really want it
- It's a special occasion
- I am upset and I just don't care
- I am craving it, and I will probably just eat it eventually

Make a response card or write in your journal:

Every time I eat something I did not intend to, I might feel good for a few seconds, but I will feel bad afterwards. If I want to lose excess weight and keep it off, I must stop fooling myself.





GET BACK ON TRACK

I can't believe I let myself eat this! I've really blown it....I might as well eat whatever I want for the rest of the day and start dieting again tomorrow.

Get Back on Track **NOW**

- Acknowledge your initial slip-this one mistake is not going to make me gain weight this week
- Recommit yourself to your diet
- Draw a symbolic line-don't give yourself until tomorrow to get back on track
- Give yourself credit for stopping at any point
- Watch out for feelings of failure and helplessness-no one is perfect
- Continue to eat normally-don't try to restrict to make up for




SECTION 3

Take a break, review what you have learned, then move on to
section 3 of Mindful Eating!



GET READY TO WEIGH

Weighing in:

- Allows you to celebrate and build up confidence when you've lost weight
 - Helps in keeping yourself honest if you have not seen progress
 - Helps to stay committed to the program - if you are happy with progress, you will feel more motivated to continue; if you feel disappointed, commit to figuring out what to change
 - Weighing yourself can erode your motivation more than it helps if you step on the scale with the wrong mindset
- 

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

Situation: The scale shows a higher weight than you had hoped for



Sabotaging Thought: "I can't believe it. This is really terrible."



Emotion: Upset (angry, sad, demoralized, hopeless)



Behavior: Embark on a "bad eating day"



MAKE YOUR GRAPH

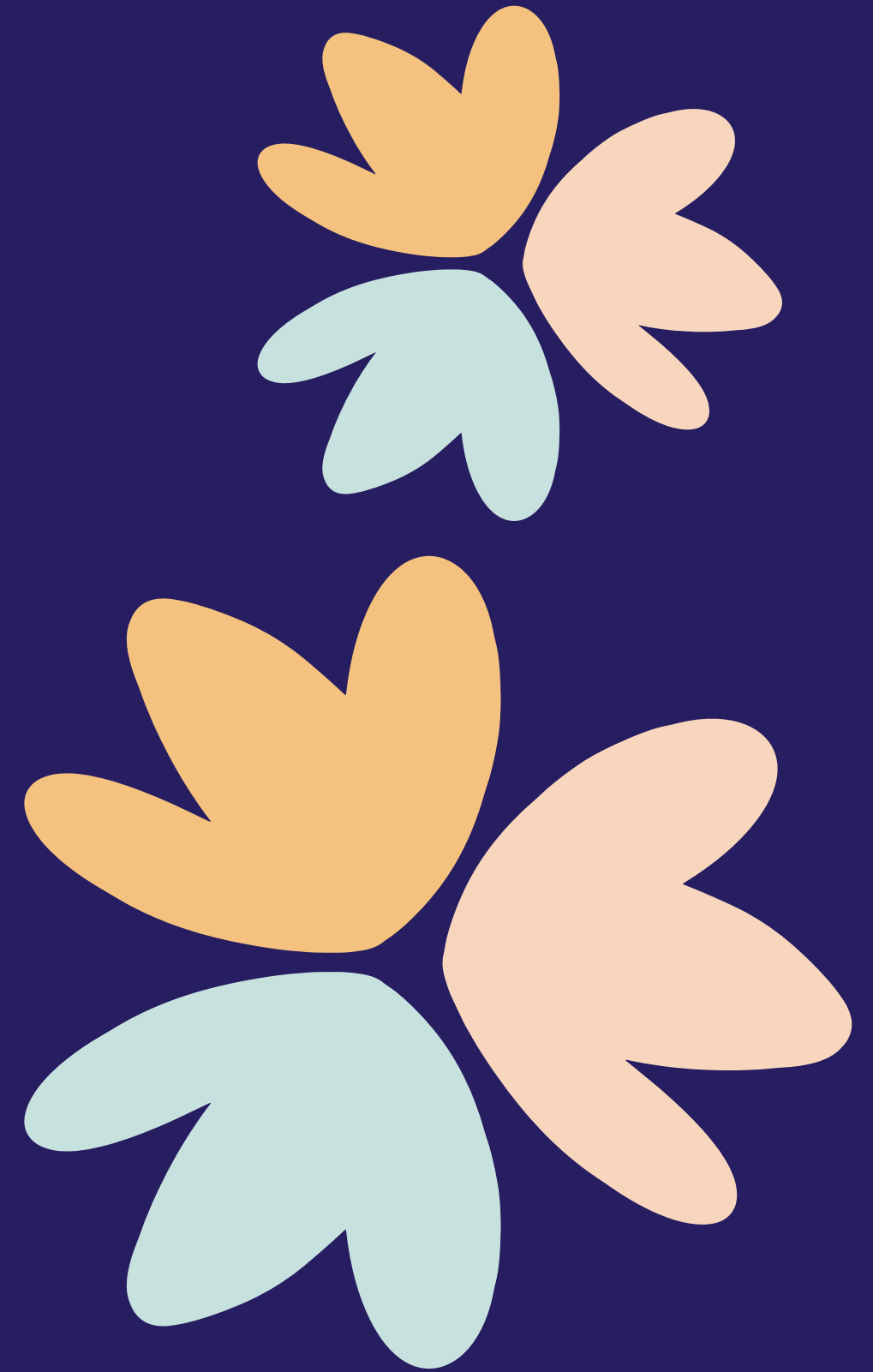
- Keep track of your weight once a week, same day and time
- This will help you get an overall sense of progress and prevent focusing too narrowly on the number on the scale on any particular day
- Start at base weight and go from there
- Remember that your weight will go down after surgery but unlikely that it will go down significantly or go down at all every week
- If you view your weight as indication of how weak, inadequate, or out of control you are, then weight gains can easily result in overeating. It is important to use the scale as an information tool that provides data you use to guide your eating
- Remember that you can fluctuate up to 5 lb a day due to a variety of reasons

REMEMBER! →

Question for your notebook: Before I get on the scale, I am going to tell myself....

SAY “OH WELL” TO DISAPPOINTMENT

- At some point you will feel the disadvantages of changing your diet seem to outweigh the advantages
- You can't stop sabotaging thoughts from arising, but you can respond to them
- Incorporating the “oh well” approach - meaning I don't like it but I'm going to accept it and move on
- To make the struggle a little easier, try to do these things:
 - Read your list of reasons to lose weight and think about the benefits you will get from sticking to your diet
 - Think about the following: is it better to struggle about the unfairness or accept it and move on? Everyone has unfair parts of life
 - Put unfairness in perspective by making a mental note of positive things in your life



PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR THINKING

- Here's how you will know if you're having a sabotaging thought:
 - You will feel tempted to eat something you shouldn't
 - You actually eat something you shouldn't
 - You feel tempted to skip doing parts of this program
 - You feel unhappy about some element of healthy eating

You can stop yourself from unplanned eating and engaging in other sabotaging behaviors by talking back to your thoughts.

Questions for notebook: What did I do today to avoid unplanned eating... If I got off track, what happened... What can I learn from this for next time.....

RECOGNIZING THINKING MISTAKES

Nine Common Thinking Errors

Thinking mistake #1: All or Nothing Thinking

You see things in only two categories when there's really a middle ground.

Example: Either I am completely on my diet or off

Thinking mistake #2: Negative Fortune Telling

You predict the future negatively, without considering other possible outcomes

Example: Since I didn't lose weight this week, I'll never lose weight

Thinking mistake #3: Overly Positive Fortune Telling

You predict the future too positively, without considering other possible outcomes

Example: It's okay if I just estimate the amount of food I'm supposed to have instead of measuring it. I'll still lose weight.

Thinking mistake #4: Emotional Reasoning

You think your ideas must be true even though objective evidence says not.

Example: I feel like I just have to have something sweet right now

Thinking Mistake #5: Mind Reading

You're sure of what others are thinking even in the absence of compelling data

Example: She'll think I am rude if I don't try the brownies she baked

RECOGNIZING THINKING MISTAKES

Nine Common Thinking Errors - Continued

Thinking Mistake #6: Self-Deluding Thinking

You rationalize by telling yourself things you don't really believe at other times

Example: It won't matter if I give in to my craving

Thinking Mistake #7: Unhelpful Rules

You mandate actions without taking circumstances into consideration

Example: I can't waste food

Thinking Mistake #8: Justification

You link two unrelated concepts (to justify your eating)

Example: I deserve to eat this because I'm so stressed out

Thinking Mistake #9: Exaggerated Thinking

You make a situation seem greater or worse than it really is

Example: I can't stand this craving

MASTER THE SEVEN QUESTION TECHNIQUE

Through reviewing notes in your journal/notebook, identify common thinking errors -
“What do I wish I could remember the next time I have this thought?”

These questions can help:

- What kind of thinking error could I be making?
- What evidence is there that this thought might not be true (or completely true)?
- Is there an alternative explanation or another way of viewing this?
- What is the most realistic outcome of the situation?
- What is the effect of my believing this thought and what could be the effect of changing my thinking?
- What would you tell a close friend or family member if they were in this situation and had this thought?
- What should I do now?

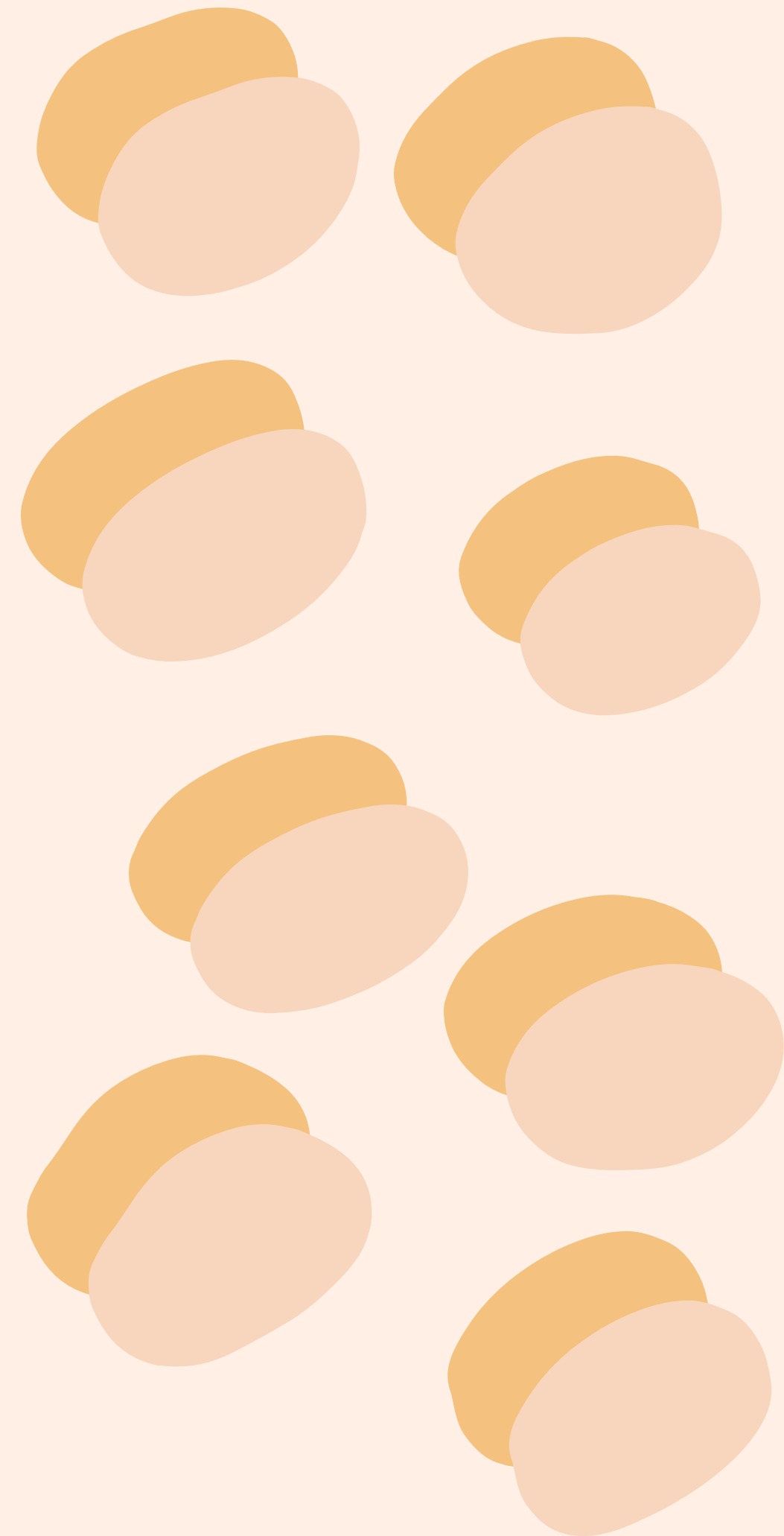
RESIST FOOD PUSHERS

Ever feel you offend others if politely refusing food they offer?

- If you ever answer yes, you may have thoughts getting in your way of progress.
 - The first is that other people's desire to have you eat their food is more important than your desire to lose weight
 - The second is that it's wrong to stick up for yourself, especially if it will mean disappointing others
- Thinking a different way
 - You're entitled to work toward your goal of losing weight as long as you are not maliciously trying to make someone feel bad
 - It's okay to disappoint others, disappointment is a normal part of life, and it will most likely be mild and fleeting
- Consider self
 - Won't I be disappointed if I accept food and stray from my food plan?
 - Why is it more important for me to please them than it is to do what is best for me?

How to say NO

1. Evaluate how you would respond to someone who declined to eat what you offered
2. Prepare how you will respond
3. Visualize your plan in action



STAY IN CONTROL WHEN EATING OUT

Many people apply special eating and drinking rules to special occasions - giving self permission to indulge. Having a plan for eating out and sticking to it EVERYTIME takes preparation and practice.

- Choose a day and place - pick a day of the week you are not particularly stressed out and plan on eating a little earlier than normal - you won't be so hungry. Make sure this restaurant has food that you will be able to eat.
- Go with a friend - choose someone who will not push food on you
- Plan in advance how much you're going to eat - it's fine to eat a little more than usual - 25% more calories than your ordinary meal as long as it's not often
- Plan what you're going to eat - see if the menu is listed on the website, plan what you will order
- Anticipate the sabotaging thoughts you might have
- Plan how you'll tolerate cravings - going to the restroom, stepping away
- When your food arrives, portion off food the food you can eat-immediately push the extra food not on your plan to the side of your plate.
- Assess your success-once you get back home, determine how you did. If it was too challenging, try it again
- If you did well but feel disgruntled because you could not eat everything you wanted, work on sabotaging thoughts-give yourself credit for following through with the food plan and work on "oh well".

Dining Out Strategies

- Order smaller portions or off the kids menu
- If eating at the buffet, look at all the food options before filling your plate
- Practice what you know - eat slowly, chew thoroughly
- When finished eating, make it final - push away plate, put napkin on the plate



DECIDE ABOUT DRINKING

If you want to fit drinking into your healthy eating, then you have to plan for it. Whatever you decide to do about alcohol is fine as long as you (prior to surgery only):

- You don't skimp on food
- You plan when and how much you will drink
- You calculate beforehand how caloric the drink is
- You don't allow alcohol to lead to unplanned eating

PREPARE TO TRAVEL

A week before your trip, create a healthy food strategy

Decide how closely you'll follow your plan

Allow yourself a few hundred extra calories every day

Follow your usual plan every day but add minor splurges on a few occasions

Follow your diet every day except for a splurge on the last day



PREPARE TO TRAVEL

How Not to Gain Too Much

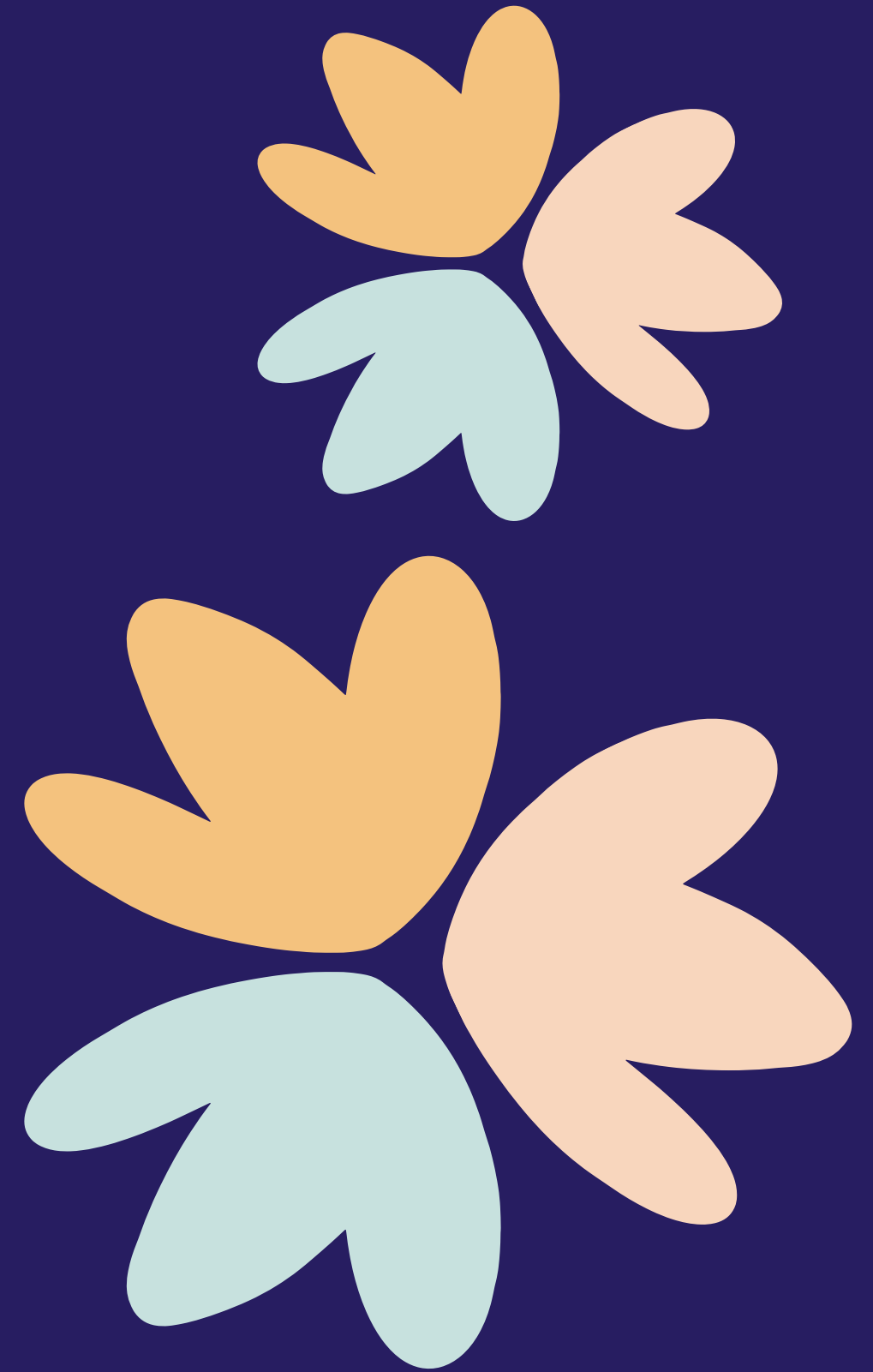
- Exercise more - will help in counteracting small amounts of overeating
- Eat brunch instead of breakfast or lunch OR eat small snack or light lunch during the middle of the day
- Carry food with you
- Use strategies that work for you - use your knowledge that you have learned

When getting home

- Make sure to re-establish helpful eating habits
- Eat sitting down and slowly
- Planning meals
- Monitoring everything you eat

ELIMINATE EMOTIONAL EATING

- Emotional eating includes soothing yourself because of stress or boredom
- How to Calm Down
 - Do you think you can't tolerate negative feelings - YOU CAN
 - Negative emotions are not dangerous - you will not fall apart experiencing them, a negative emotion is not an emergency
 - Can use techniques same as pushing through craving
- Use Mindset Techniques
 - Label how you are feeling "I'm just upset, I am not hungry"
 - Stand firm - tell yourself you are absolutely not eating when upset
 - Don't give yourself a choice - once you say NO CHOICE, you will stop struggling
 - Image the aftermath of giving in
 - Read your response cards you made



BEHAVIORAL TECHNIQUES

- Distract yourself
- Drink a soothing no or low-calorie beverage (such as hot/herbal tea)
- Relax - deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation, meditation, etc

After you calm down, work on problem solving that led to the negative emotion.

You have to deal with distress in non-food related ways if you want to sustain permanent weight loss.

Question for notebook: The next time I'm upset, I'm going to....



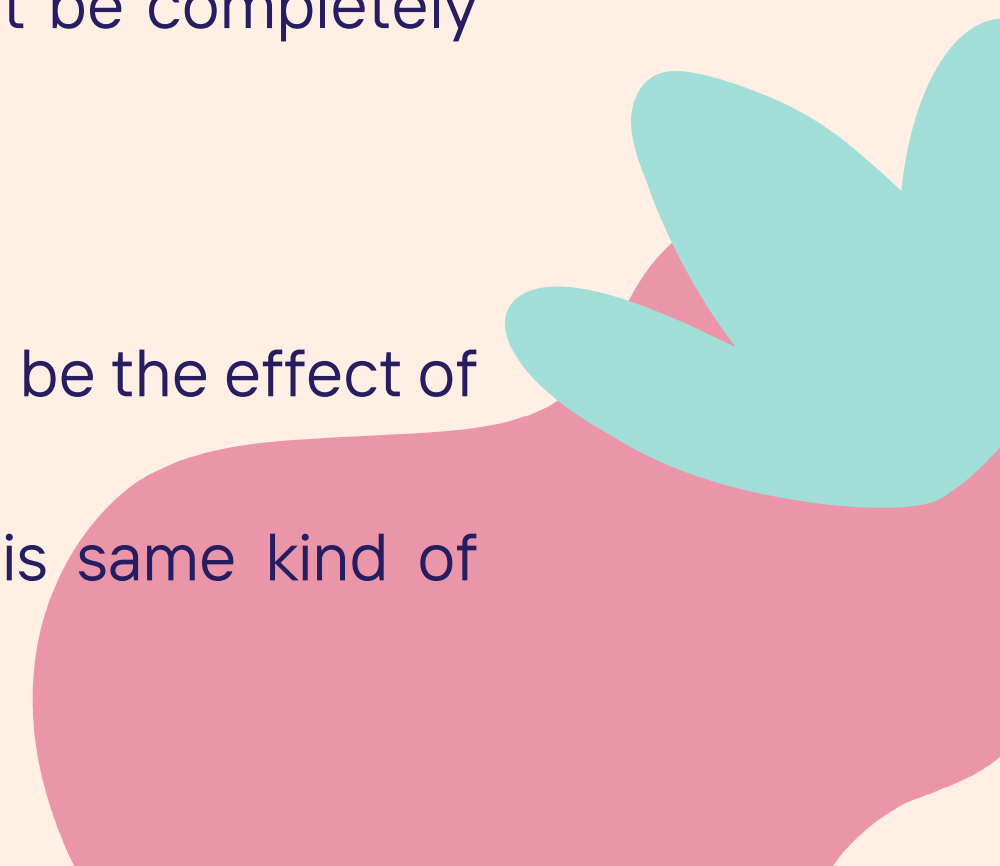
SECTION 4

Take a break, review what you have learned, then move on to
section 4 of Mindful Eating!



SOLVE PROBLEMS

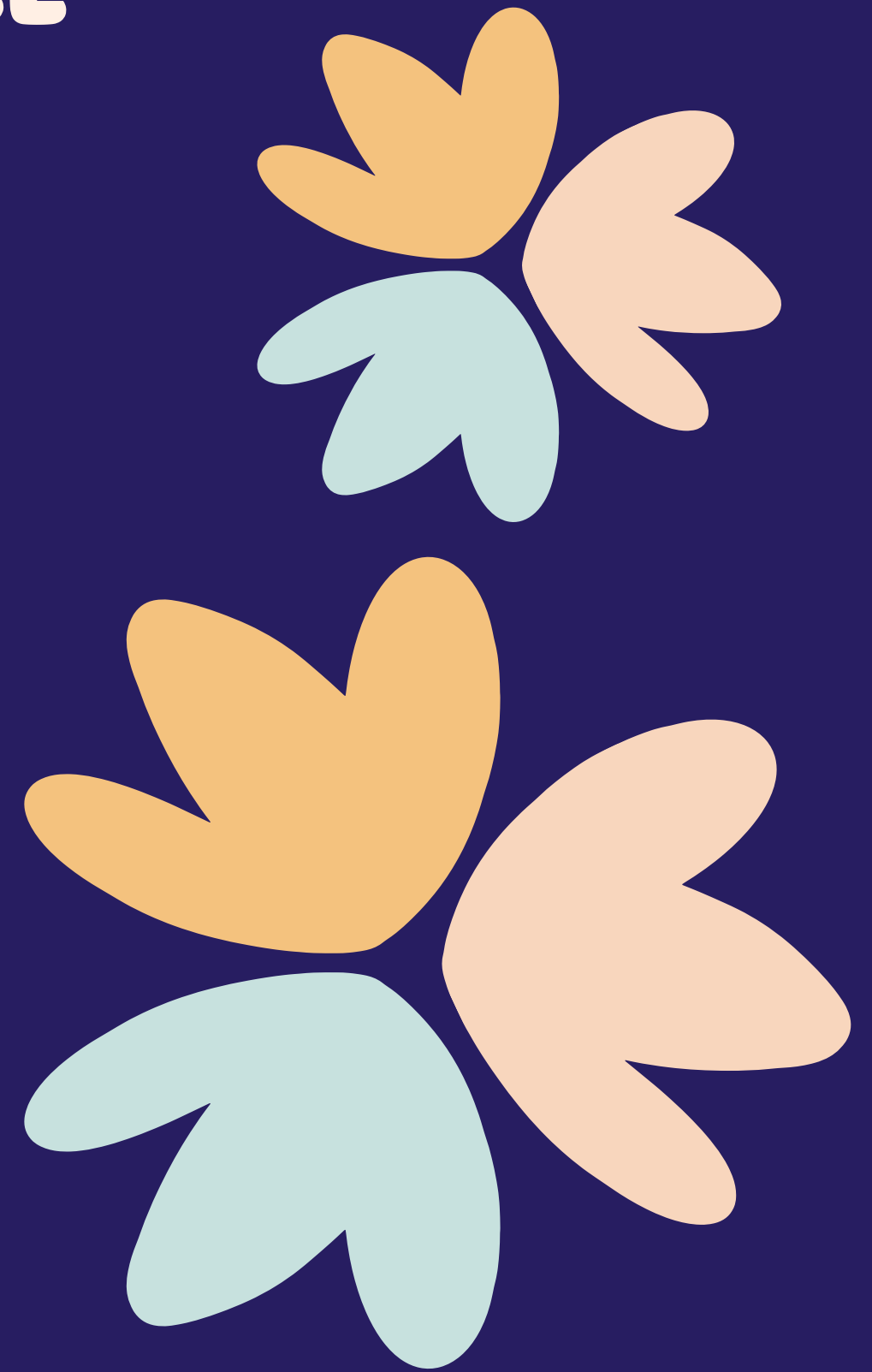
Becoming an effective problem solver can help feel more in control, less upset, and therefore less likely to turn to emotional eating.

- Identify the problem - sometimes easy, sometimes more difficult
 - Once the problem is identified, consider: (Seven Question Technique)
 - What kind of thinking error could I be making?
 - What is the evidence that this thought might not be true or might not be completely true?
 - Is there an alternative explanation or another way of viewing this?
 - What is the most realistic outcome of this situation?
 - What is the effect of my believing this negative thought and what could be the effect of changing my thinking?
 - What would I tell my friend if she were in this situation and had this same kind of thought?
 - What should I do now?
- 

SABOTAGING THOUGHTS CAN GET IN YOUR WAY, UNDERMINING CONFIDENCE

- I can't do this. I can't solve this problem.
 - Helpful response: Most problems can be solved, or partially solved, even if I don't see the solution right now.
- This solution isn't going to work.
 - Helpful response: It might or might not. Maybe I should try it. I can call on a friend to help me figure out what to do.
- I don't even want to think about the problem. I'd rather just eat.
 - Helpful response: Eating is just a short-term fix that'll make me feel even worse in the long run.

Question for Notebook: The next time I have a problem, instead of turning to food, I will.....



BELIEVE IT

- I'm losing weight because I've learned how. I now know:
 - What I have to do (plan my eating, eat slowly while sitting down, use anti craving strategies)
 - What I have to remind myself (hunger and cravings are NOT EMERGENCIES, NO CHOICE, Oh well)
 - How to motivate myself(get support, read Advantage Response Card, give myself credit everyday)
 - How to stay honest (report to my diet coach)
 - Give myself credit

SABOTAGING THOUGHTS

- If I start to believe that I can do this, I will jinx myself
 - Helpful response: On the contrary, if I believe I can't do this, then I am likely to run into trouble when making changes to my diet gets tougher. If I build my confidence, I will keep making progress.
- If I recognize my progress, I'll get too confidence and start to loosen up.
 - Helpful response: I will be able to catch myself, as long as I continue to review my To-Do List and hold myself accountable
- It's a lot of work to do these things forever...
 - Helpful response: I don't need to use all my skills forever, and the ones I do need will become more automatic over time. The results are worth it!!

Question for Notebook: Whenever I begin to worry that I can't lose weight, I will remind myself....

REDUCE STRESS

Everyone experiences stress. Mild stress can be helpful to assist in motivation to be productive. But high levels of stress can be counterproductive.

Three steps to lower stress:

1. Solve the problem: If too stressed, go back to the priority chart. Use the Seven Questions Technique to respond to negative thoughts. Reach out for help.
2. Relax: Chronic stress can make your body tense. Deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation.
3. Change our mindset: You can be chronically stressed due to allowing unreasonable rules to guide your behavior. These rules usually have “should or shouldn’t” in them.

REDUCE STRESS

Identify the rules you have for yourself: Your “should” and “shouldn’ts” will show up when you try to problem solve and exclude more reasonable solutions if your rules are too rigid.

Attempt to relax self-imposed rules:

- Consider whether you would want your loved ones to live by a particular rule
- Think of advantages of changing your rules
- Take the words “always” and “never” out of rules

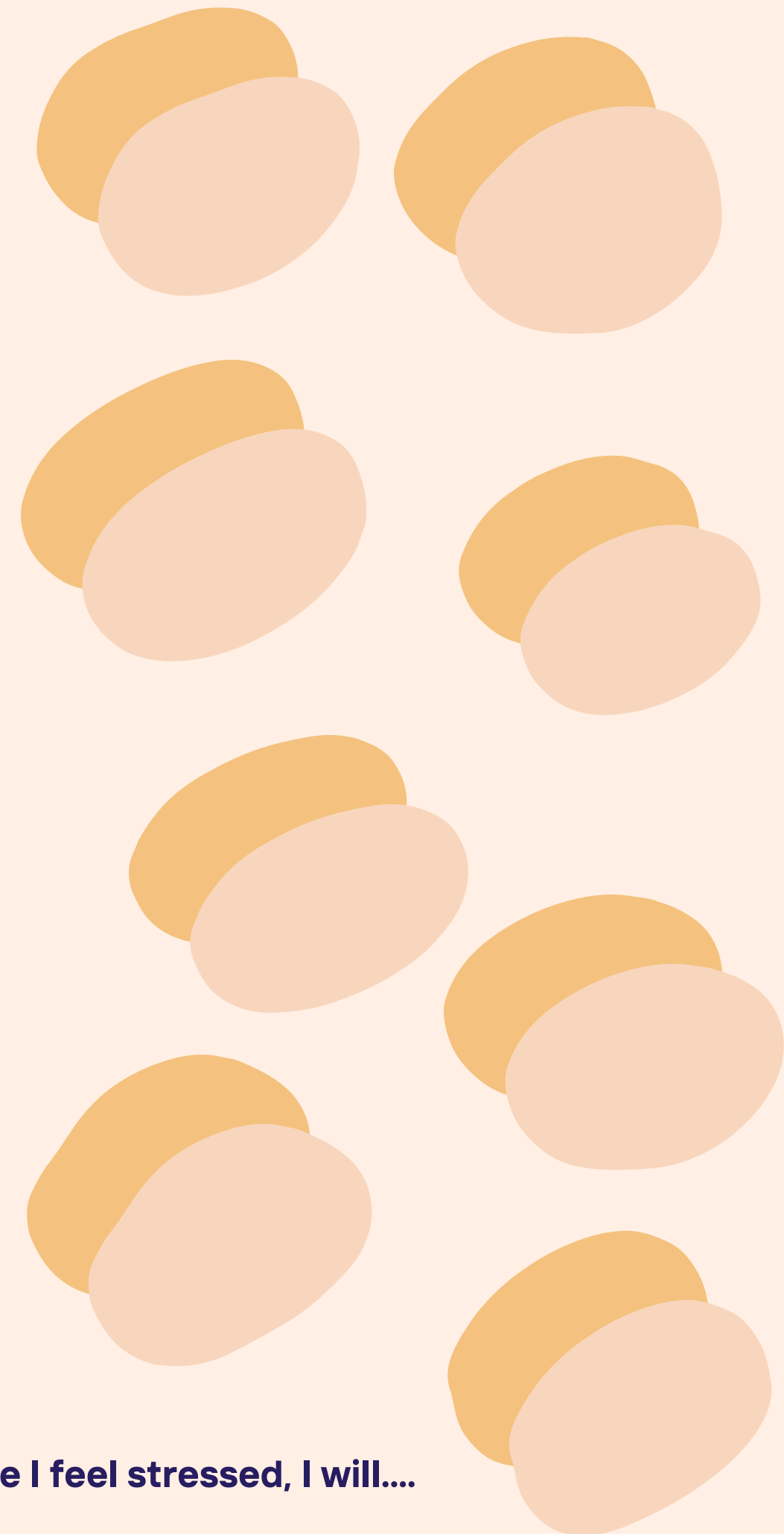
Relax your rules OF others: Do you find yourself having unreasonable expectations of others?

- Other people should always be perfect
- Other people should be able to read your mind
- Other people should always be grateful
- Other people should not make me unhappy

Relax your rules FOR others

- Recognize that you do not have control over others, only able to control yourself
- Think about advantages of changing your rules
- Take the words “always” and “never” out of rules
- Change should and shouldn’ts to be realistic -
 - Realize others will make mistakes
 - Not everyone will be grateful
 - They won’t know what I want or need unless I tell them

Question for Notebook: The next time I feel stressed, I will....



DEAL WITH PLATEAUS

- Many individuals feel that they should be able to lose weight every week without interruption-do you feel that way?
 - Usually goes: lose some, stay the same for a week or two, lose some more, gain a little back, lose some more, plateau for a week or two and so on....
- Mini plateaus are normal can be due to water retention, hormonal changes, or other biological influences; can also truly be more calories in and less exercise
- If you expect the scale to go down every week, you're setting yourself up for disappointment-occasional plateaus and small weight gains are inevitable
- We can address plateaus that last a month or longer
- If you hit one of these longer plateaus you have 4 options:
 - Continue to do what you are doing and see if you start to lose weight again
 - Reduce your daily calorie intake
 - Increase your daily exercise by 15-20 minutes
 - Call this our goal weight and move into maintenance
- You should expect occasional weight gains or plateaus even if you've done everything right



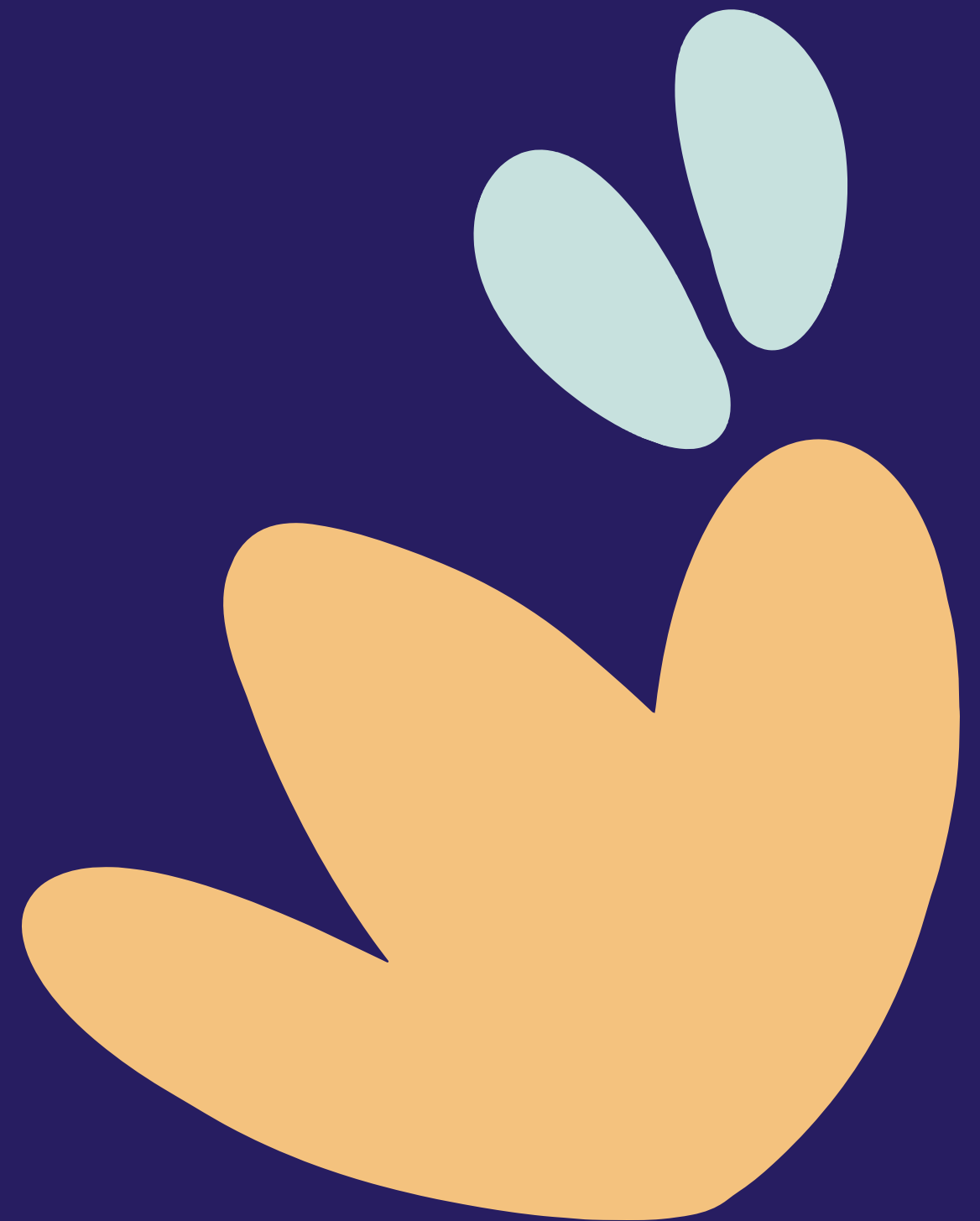
KEEP UP WITH EXERCISE

When struggling you can:

- Focus on how you'll feel after you finish, not on how you feel at the beginning-reminder that the hardest part is getting started
- Put exercise in the NO CHOICE category
- Have a buddy exercise with you or get a personal trainer
- Give yourself credit for what you can and did do
- Focus on overall progress
- End your session with something positive (such as the hydro massage at Planet Fitness!)
- Make sure you are doing an exercise you like and can stick with

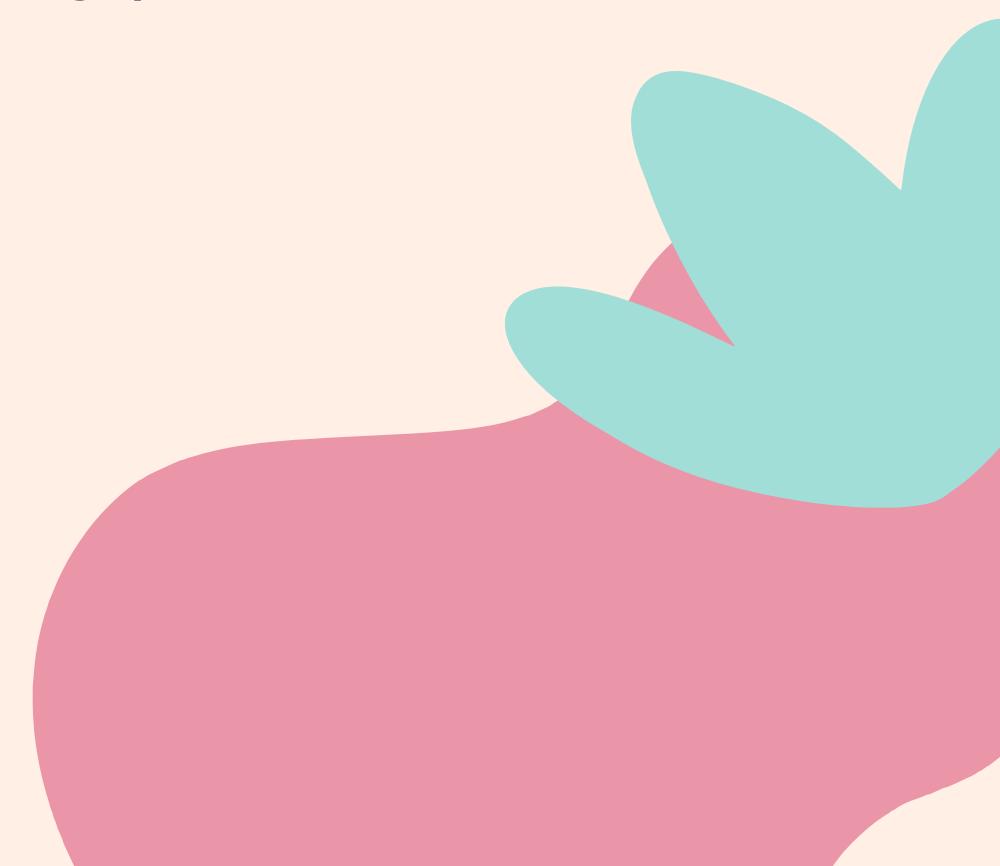
SABOTAGING THOUGHTS

- It's okay to skip exercising today because I don't want to, I'm too tired
 - Helpful response: It's not okay. Exercise is an essential part of losing weight and maintaining my weight loss.
- I'm not going to keep this up forever, so why start?
 - I can do it today. If I have trouble doing it later on, I'll solve that problem then.
- I'm not the exercise type of person.
 - I don't have to be an exercise fanatic. I can continue doing what I've been doing and just gradually increase it.





EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS

- Many people believe they should not pursue new interests and goals until AFTER they have lost excess weight.
 - Expanding your activities lifts your mood and gives you lots of non-food related opportunities for pleasure and satisfaction. Improving your life actually increases your chances of diet success!
- 



PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

CONGRATULATIONS!!! You have completed this module.
Hopefully you have learned some powerfull skills to incorporate in your life.

Reflection questions: What did you find most valuable? What challenges do you feel you face?

Feel free to bring and review this content and the quizzes with your social worker or dietitian at the next appointment.