

Live your Inspired Life

Low FODMAP Diet Coaching

Barriers to Success

We all have little devils that sit on one shoulder trying to derail us at every corner. Who knows where they come from! Probably from some mixture of our genes and our upbringing. We have been indoctrinated with subtle negative messages over time which undermine our self-confidence and self-esteem.

If you are struggling unsuccessfully to stick to the diet, there may be more than one factor that is contributing to your battle. Let's have a look at some other factors that might be hindering you on your way to your goal.



Stress

For many people, stress sends them straight for food. And not just any food, but straight to the foods that will do the most damage. That usually entails fatty or sweet food. Both are potentially dangerous for you. Too much fat is a gut irritant and too much sweet food can result in an overload of fructose. When an emotional upset makes you reach for comfort food, just make sure it is still low Fodmap. There is no reason why it shouldn't be. There are heaps of delicious low Fodmap recipes, both sweet and savoury (perhaps frozen for just such occasions). Have some on hand for when that coping mechanism kicks into place and you reach for forbidden high Fodmap food. Avoiding stress is not always possible, so first employ one of the relaxation techniques you learned in week two. Studies have shown that relaxation techniques - in particular, guided imagery - helps people reach their goals. This alone could counterbalance that need to dive for comfort food in times of stress.



Depression

There is a link between an intolerance to low Fodmaps and depression. You need to be able to absorb the nutrients in food to be happy and healthy. Intolerance to Fodmaps can impair the absorption of tryptophan in the small intestine. The body uses tryptophan to help make niacin and serotonin. Serotonin is thought to produce healthy sleep and a stable mood. Once you are on this diet, any depression should start to improve but depression can be a serious barrier to reaching your goal.

Cost

Food costs money whether it's for a normal diet or a restricted diet but there is a misconception that special diets are expensive. Indian and other Asian shops can be good places to buy cheap gluten-free supplies, especially gluten-free flours. Always buy your fruit and vegetables in season so they are cheap and fresh. Frozen fruit and vegetables are a good back up to always have in the freezer. If they are snap frozen, then much of the goodness is intact. If possible, you can grow a small garden at home of the main low Fodmap vegetables. Even if you only have an apartment or small garden, you can use pots to great effect and it is fashionable to have gardens growing up walls.

Time Constraints

Many people will tell you they don't have enough time to cook complete meals or to bake, instead getting processed foods to shortcut preparation. I would say that you can't afford not to find the time to prepare food from scratch or you will suffer and that will slow you down. So the time spent on cooking will be well rewarded by good health. Also, steaming vegetables and a piece of fish couldn't be simpler. There is no excuse to buy processed food which can contain all sorts of hidden Fodmaps. You can save time by batch cooking and freezing meals or by making a massive salad and having it over two days. As long as it hasn't been dressed, it will keep perfectly well covered in the fridge. If you are used to eating processed foods, this will take a mindset change and this is essential if you are to stay symptom-free. Instead of spending mindless time in front of electronic devices, go to the kitchen and spend the time in a wise way, helping to keep you healthy. It is rarely true that a person has no time. It's about how they choose to spend their time.



Temptation

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Temptations are everywhere. You are out in the car and starving when you pass a fast food joint. How quick and cheap it would be to drive through and grab something to eat. You are out with your friends at a cocktail party and everyone is grabbing whatever delicious nibbles pass them by on a plate. Your mother comes to visit with cream cakes.

Eliminating temptation is an almost-impossible feat. You will have to be strong and to be prepared with tactics to divert your attention from the temptation. To avoid the lure of fast food, make sure you have food always on hand. Always have snacks in your bag so you never get desperately hungry. Eat before going to cocktail parties so you are not tempted to pick up some delicacy and pop it in your mouth. Pull out some frozen muffins from the freezer and microwave them if you mother turns up with forbidden food and let her have the cream cakes.



How you feel when you fail

- When you fail, you **blame** yourself for being “bad”. You are probably quite harsh with yourself because you don’t want to be a fallible person. This will make you feel angry, frustrated and anxious. You are judging yourself harshly. But we are all fallible – it is part of what makes us human.
- Blame leads to feeling **guilty**, and guilt is paralyzing. It stops you from moving forward. You might even feel that since you have failed, you might as well give up. Guilt is a useless, destructive emotion and the opposite of motivating. It weighs you down and stops you reaching your goals.
- Guilt leads to **shame**, a feeling of humiliating disgrace. When you feel shame, you feel worthless, and when you feel worthless, you can’t go much deeper. As you might imagine, shame is usually accompanied by depression and hopelessness.

So now there is no way you can achieve your goals. So it’s important not to get into this downward spiral.



Tips for breaking down these barriers

- Try to understand why and how things went so wrong that you made a choice that was not consistent with you reaching your goals. If you can get to the bottom of the circumstances surrounding your slip up, you will be able to eliminate that barrier the next time. For example, if it was that fast food place you saw when you were super hungry, you know to take food with you the next time and to not let yourself get that hungry. Problem solved.
- Be compassionate with yourself when you err. Would you be this harsh on a friend if they made the same mistake? No. so treat yourself in the same way that you would treat someone else. Don't beat yourself up.
- In the same way, be encouraging to yourself just as you would with a friend. Talk to yourself about how wonderfully you are doing overall and get passed what happened. You need encouragement just the same as a child does.
- When you transgress, it is important that you are kind to yourself, but it is very, very important that you strengthen your resolve and learn from your mistake so that you never do it again.

Changing from a lifetime of blame, guilt and shame to one that's compassionate and understanding is a big step but if you acknowledge the process, that is already a big step in the right direction.

