

Appetite Foolishness

How to use this card:

Pass this card around. Each person please state your name and read a small section of the content on Appetite Foolishness:

Concept 4: Appetite Foolishness

Desiring and repeatedly consuming things you know are hurting you

“Appetite foolishness” is characterized by craving things that are unhealthy for your body. You experience appetite foolishness if you get repeated urges to consume foods or beverages that temporarily resolve a discomfort but create a greater problem over time. Many feelings we assume are our emotions are really reactions to drug-like food. It is very easy to develop appetite foolishness in a culture that combines a food supply that is more like drugs than food with intense profit motive.

If appetite foolishness is part of your problem, the matching solution will include changes in habits. The solution is simple, but it may not be easy. It calls for 1) a diet of wholesome foods to meet personal nutritional needs, 2) new habits of mind and body, and 3) a community of family, mentors, and peers to support the change process. For some individuals, professional help will be necessary, especially when toxicity is an issue. But even the best professional help is no substitute for support from a community of caring people who want to see their loved ones thrive.

Ed’s Story: Play It to the End

This is not my idea originally, but I got a lot of credit at our meeting for bringing it into our group. It’s an activity called “Play It to the End.”

The issue was self-sabotage. Everybody in our group attends Suppers in the hope of turning around long-term eating patterns that have gotten us into a lot of trouble. Some of us are literally digging our graves with our forks. We’ve eaten out of control until the diagnosis of diabetes stirred the fear of God in us. Our eyes were wide open. Every time we put something in our mouths, we were there (if not consciously present). Some of us knew it ran in our families. Still, we dug deeper.

One member said her best form of self-sabotage was continuing to socialize with people whose favorite activities were eating and drinking. Another said she could trick herself every time by telling herself, “Oh I’ll just eat two.” Wrong. Two equals twenty. Most of us had some experience with the skip-breakfast-save-calories logic. Bad. But the form of self-sabotage we all did over and over was to seduce ourselves into eating by blindly anticipating the pleasures of eating, without remembering the consequences.

So my contribution to Suppers is the activity called “Play It to the End.” Here’s how it works.

The speaker recounts a made-up story about indulging in a favorite – and problematical – food, but has to tell the whole story, including the part about the consequences. This is “playing the tape to the end.” Here’s my story:

“We are at a reception and the dessert table is beckoning. There is a cheesecake dripping with cherry sauce, three kinds of chocolate cake, a key lime pie, champagne flutes of chocolate mousse, and five kinds of cookies. I take slivers of each of the chocolate cakes. I am in heaven. The one with a layer of chocolate ganache is especially delicious. I go back for a bigger slice, plus a wedge of key lime pie and a few cookies. For ten minutes I am totally happy. I swallow the last bite. Now it’s all in my stomach. I think about the calories, the

fact that it's 9 p.m., and how I'll probably be up for three hours in the middle of the night after so much sugar and stimulation. Of course I sleep badly. I feel bloated and disgusting. I kick myself for forgetting the consequences of late night blasts of sugar."

I have imagined the first part of scenes like this again and again, but for some reason remembering the whole experience doesn't come automatically. The automatic part of my brain only recalls the anticipation and the eating. It requires my full, conscious participation to recall the consequences, but I have spared myself many nights of lost sleep since I learned to play my eating scenarios to the end.

Let members share their imaginary experiences of anticipating, eating, and then feeling the consequences of consuming a food that acts more like a drug for them. To help you get started, you may use a prompt:

There was a bowl of chocolates on the table. . .

Everybody wanted to go for ice cream . . .

I am passing my favorite fast food joint and . . .

Continue around the table by briefly sharing how you relate to the Suppers concept of Appetite Foolishness.

Describe a situation in which your impulses to eat lead to foolish "choices".

Discussion Prompts (Each person select a prompt that works for you.)

- What new habits might one work on to reduce foolish appetite?
- How does your social situation influence your eating?

Ideas for Next Steps:

Experiments and Observations:

- Do a thought experiment: Imagine your *Play It To The End* scenario at home.
- Do the real experiment: Plan an event and plan a healthy end. How do you feel?

Between Meetings:

- Read [Bill's Story: Self-Medicating](#), page 102 in the 2nd edition of Logical Miracles and on the Suppers website.
- Read [Bebe's Story: My Life Revolved Around a Piece of Cheese](#), page 103 in the 2nd edition of Logical Miracles and on the Suppers website.