

Lifestyle Coach Facilitation Guide: Core

Session 8: Take Charge of What's Around You

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Background and Preparation

Preparation Checklist

Materials

These are the materials you will use during Session 8.

- Participant handouts for Session 8:
 - Session 8 Overview
 - What Makes Us Eat?
 - Changing Food Cues and Habits
 - Shopping Tips
 - Activity Cues
 - To Do Next Week
- “Food and Activity Trackers” for Session 8
- Lifestyle Coach’s Log
- Name tags or tents from previous week, if still needed
- Flip chart or chalk board supplies

Before you begin

- Choose a private place to weigh participants.
- If still needed, prepare name tags or set up the classroom with name tents from the previous week.
- Have your Lifestyle Coach’s Log ready for weigh-ins.

Lifestyle Coach Brief

Learning objectives

At the close of this session, the participants will know how to –

- Recognize positive and negative food and activity cues.
- Change negative food and activity cues to positive cues.
- Add positive cues for activity and eliminate cues for inactivity.
- Develop a plan for removing one problem food cue for the coming week.

Session 8 overview

Session 8 focuses on how our surroundings can affect behavior. The concepts of “food cues” and “activity cues” are introduced in order to prompt a discussion about factors in our environment that can lead us, either positively or negatively, to make choices about eating and being active. The main message is that when we respond the same way to a food or activity cue over and over again, we build a habit.

Much of this session involves participants visualizing their homes, workplaces, and general surroundings to become aware of their negative cues and how to either eliminate them or replace them with positive cues.

Session 8 is broken into four parts:

Part 1: Weekly Progress and Review (10 minutes)

Part 2: Food Cues (25 minutes)

Negative food cues are events, situations, or people that lead us to eat when we are not hungry (e.g., being at the movies is a cue for many people to buy and eat popcorn). Participants will look for their negative food cues and work together to come up with ways to eliminate them or to come up with alternative, healthier cues.

Part 3: Activity Cues (15 minutes)

Just as negative food cues lead us to overeating, negative activity cues lead us to being inactive. For example, when dinner is over, many people automatically go and sit in front of the TV; they followed the cue “now sit in front of the TV.” Participants will look for their own negative activity cues and work together to come up with positive alternatives.

Part 4: Wrap Up and To-Do List (10 minutes)

Key messages


These are the key messages for this session. They should be reinforced from time to time throughout this program.

- It is important to become aware of the many factors that influence our behavior related to eating and activity, some in positive ways and some in negative ways.
- The good news is that we can make food and activity cues work for us, not against us.
- Not all food and activity cues are bad. They can be a problem if they get in the way of our efforts to eat less fat and fewer calories or to be more active. However, by adding positive cues we can start new, healthier habits.
- It is important to build positive lifestyle cues into our daily routine.

Classroom Presentation

Part 1: Weekly Progress and Review

Estimated time: 10 minutes

Weigh In	Notes
<p>Weigh participants privately, and have them record their weight on their “How Am I Doing? Weight” charts.</p> <p>Record participants weight in your Lifestyle Coach’s Log.</p> <p>Distribute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Session 8 handouts to insert in the Participant Notebooks.• Session 8 “Food and Activity Trackers.”• Session 6 “Food and Activity Trackers” with your notes. <p>Collect Session 7 “Food and Activity Trackers.”</p>	
Week in Review	Notes
<p>Discuss participants’ successes and difficulties in meeting their weight loss goals.</p> <p>Present: Last week, we talked about balancing the calories you take in through eating with the calories you use during physical activity. Food and physical activity work together to control your weight. To lose weight, eat fewer calories and be more active.</p> <p>Distribute Session 8 handouts.</p> <p> Refer participants to the “How Am I Doing? Physical Activity” chart in the Participant Notebook.</p> <p>Present: Take a moment to record your activity from last week on the “How Am I Doing? Physical Activity” chart.</p>	

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Ask: How many of you reached your goal for physical activity?

Open responses.

Ask: Were you able to make the active lifestyle choices you planned?

Open responses.

Ask: If you decided to lower your calorie goal or fat gram goal, were you able to do so?

Open responses.

Address any issues or confusion about what participants were asked to do during the past week.

This Week

Notes

Present: This week we will –

- Step back and take a look at the triggers that make us want to eat and avoid physical activity. These triggers are called “cues.”
- Look at ways to change problem food and activity cues.
- Find ways to add positive cues for activity and eliminate cues for inactivity.

Session 8: Take Charge of What's Around You

Part 2: Food Cues

Estimated time: 25 minutes

Defining "Cues

Notes

Present: At this point in the program, we want to help you understand some basics about behavior. We are going to talk about the factors that have a powerful effect on how much we eat, what we eat, and how much we move.

Scientists who study how people learn call these factors "cues." Cues can be positive or negative. Cues are a problem when they have a negative effect on our behavior, and lead us to overeat or be inactive.

- Food cues: factors that affect how much we eat.
- Activity cues: factors that affect our level of activity.

We are not only going to talk about how cues affect us, but also – and more importantly – how each of us can take charge of those cues so that they do not stand in the way of meeting our goals.

We will also talk about how to develop positive food and activity cues that will help you eat more healthfully and do more physical activity.

Cues that Make Us Eat

Notes

Present: Let's start with food cues.

Ask: What cues make you want to eat?

Open responses.



Refer participants to the "What Makes Us Eat?" handout in the Participant Notebook.

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Offer these suggestions:

- *Hunger*: of course, one reason we eat is because we're hungry.
- *Thinking or feeling*: you might eat because you feel lonely, bored, or happy.
- *Other people*: you might eat something because it is offered to you or because other people are eating it.

Example: Everyone is having dessert, so you do too.

- *Sight or smell of food*: one of the most powerful cues.

Example: You see ice cream in the freezer or in a TV commercial. You decide to have some.

- *Certain activities* such as watching TV or reading a magazine may make you think about eating.

Example: You automatically buy popcorn when you go to the movies.

Ask: Is anyone willing to share examples of their food cues?

Open responses.

Present: For example, why do we eat popcorn at the movies?

Open responses.

Present: Do you think it is because we are hungry? Most likely it is because eating popcorn at the movies is a habit.

When you respond to a food cue in the same way over and over again, you build a habit. When faced with the food cue, your response becomes more and more automatic.

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When eating popcorn at the movie is a habit, it is hard to sit through a movie and not have popcorn.

Ask: Does anyone have examples of eating habits you formed and now find hard to break?

Open responses.

Common Problem Cues in the Home

Notes

Present: Food cues are not always bad. For example, hunger is a positive food cue. Yet many food cues can be a problem because they get in the way of our efforts to eat less fat and fewer calories.

Ask: How do you think you can change problem food cues and habits?

Open responses.



Refer participants to the “Changing Food Cues and Habits” handout in the Participant Notebook.

Present: You can try these tactics:

- One of the best ways is to stay away from the food cue or keep it out of sight.
 - Stay away from the concession stand at the movies.
 - If you keep going to the movies and do not let yourself have popcorn, slowly you will stop even thinking about popcorn at the movies.
- Or you can build a new, healthier habit.
 - Rent movies to watch at home, and air pop your own popcorn. Eat it without butter.

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Present: Remember it takes time to break an old habit or build a new one. Change does not happen overnight.

It is important to become aware of the many events and situations that have a strong influence on our eating and activity behavior in both positive and negative ways. Think for a minute about the many food cues all around us. Often we are unaware of how powerful they are.

Ask: What are some examples of food cues around us that are more powerful than we might think?

Open responses.

Offer these suggestions:

- Many places have fast food restaurants and convenience stores on every corner, making it easy to get inexpensive, high-fat foods any time of the day or night.
- Supermarkets put new products on the shelves that are the easiest to see and reach. Why? Because they know that the easier we can spot and pick up the product, the more likely we are to buy.

Ask: Any other examples?

Breaking Your Problem Cues

Notes

Present: Let's talk about some of *your* problem cues and some ways you can change them.

We will start with where you live. Imagine that we have just opened the front door. Let's just visualize what is in the first room you enter, and then we will talk about what we see.

Which room are we in? Do you see any food in the room? Do you see anything else that might make you think about eating, such as a TV, a computer, or a comfortable chair?

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Move from room to room. Are there other rooms that are a problem for you?

Ask: Will one of you share a problem cue that you saw during the “tour” of your home? What change could you make to stay away from that cue or to build a new and healthier habit?

Open responses.



Note to Lifestyle Coach

For each problem cue, have the group brainstorm ways to either overcome it or replace it with a healthy cue. Write the suggestions on a flip chart page.

If participants do not respond, refer them to the records in their “Food and Activity Trackers,” or refer to the list of common problem food cues in the Participant Notebook, and ask whether the examples apply to anyone in the room.

Offer these suggestions for breaking common cues in the home, if they were not already suggested:

- TV (or computer):
 - Make it a rule never to eat while watching TV.
 - Keep an exercise bike near the TV.
 - Allow yourself only gum when watching TV.
- Candy and sweets:
 - Do not bring them into the house.
 - If you do bring them into your home, keep them out of sight.

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- If you must have candy or sweets, buy a smaller size (e.g., a 100-calorie snack bar).
- High-fat and high-calorie foods in kitchen:
 - Stop stocking these foods altogether.
 - Store them out of sight (in a brown bag or other unattractive container).
 - Make them hard to reach.
 - Keep low-fat and low-calorie food easy to reach, in sight, and ready to eat.
 - Limit high-fat and high-calorie foods to those that require you to cook them.
- Foods you cook or eat as leftovers:
 - Make a rule not to eat while cooking.
 - When cooking, taste foods only once for seasoning. Then rinse your mouth with water, or have a breath mint.
 - Rinse any utensils used in food preparation immediately after each use.
 - Ask someone else to taste the food.
 - Put leftovers away before you eat your meals. (Ask someone else to put them away, or freeze them right away for future meals).
- Dinner table:
 - Put foods on the plates in the kitchen. Do not have serving dishes on the dinner table.
 - Use small plates or bowls.

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- Serve small portions.
- Remove your plate from the table as soon as you are finished.
- Do not eat the food that your children or family members leave on their plates.

Common Problem Cues at Work

Notes

Present: You have looked at your home and found some problem food cues.

Ask: What about where you work? Is there anything on your way to work, at work, or on your way home that could be a problem food cue?

Open responses.

Offer these suggestions for breaking common cues at work, if they were not already suggested:

- Fast food restaurant (bakery, hot dog stand) on the way to or from work:
 - Take a different route.
 - Make a rule never to eat in the car.
 - Prepare a healthy lunch or breakfast the night before so they are ready to go in the morning.
- High-fat and high-calorie foods in public areas (doughnuts by the coffee pot, candy on a co-worker's desk):
 - Avoid those areas, or attempt to keep those foods out of sight.
 - Bring low-fat and low-calorie snacks to share with co-workers.

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- High-fat and high-calorie foods on your desk, in your desk drawer, or in your locker:
 - Do not bring these foods to work.
 - Keep low-fat and low-calorie snacks such as apples, raw carrots, pretzels, low-fat popcorn, or diet beverages on hand instead.
- Vending machines:
 - Stay away from vending machines.
 - Bring a low-fat and low-calorie snack from home.
 - Buy pretzels or other low-fat and low-calorie snacks, if available.
 - Ask a friend to purchase a low-calorie snack for you so you will not be tempted by the cookies or chips.

Present: The important thing to remember is this:

- Keep high-fat and high-calorie foods out of your house and workplace, or keep them out of sight.
- Keep low-fat and low-calorie foods easy to reach, in sight, and ready to eat.
 - Suggestions for low-fat and low-calorie snacks are fresh fruits, raw vegetables (already washed and prepared), nonfat dips, pretzels, low-fat popcorn, and diet drinks.
- Limit your eating to one place.
 - Eat at the table instead of eating at your desk, computer, or TV.

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- When you eat, limit other activities.
 - Eat your meal without watching TV, driving, or talking on the phone.
 - Focus on enjoying the meal.

Common Problem Shopping Cues

Notes

Present: Finally, let's take a look at where you usually shop for food. Visualize walking around the store as you normally do.

Ask: What do you see that is a problem for you?

Open responses.



Refer participants to the "Shopping Tips" handout in the Participant Notebook.

Present: You do not have as much control over what foods are in the grocery store as you do in your home, but there are some things you can do.

Here are some tips:

- Make a shopping list ahead of time. Make a rule not to buy anything that is not on the list.
- Do not go shopping when you are hungry. Have a low-fat or low-calorie meal or snack first.
- Avoid sections in the store that are tempting to you, if possible. For example, avoid the bakery or ice cream aisle. Healthy foods (e.g., dairy, protein) tend to be on the perimeter of grocery stores, not in aisles.
- Ask the grocery store manager to order low-fat and low-calorie foods that you want to buy. Remember, it is their business to please you as the customer.
- Do not be a slave to coupons. Only use the coupons that are for low-fat and low-calorie foods, not for high-fat foods.

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Ask: Are there any other problem food cues that you would like to discuss?

Open responses.

Present: Now, let's look at the kinds of cues that can cause us to be inactive.

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Part 3: Activity Cues

Estimated time: 15 minutes

Cues Associated with Inactivity

Notes

Present: Many factors (or cues) in our environment can lead to being inactive.

For example, after dinner you may automatically sit down in front of the TV (if you are not already there!). That is because you paired finishing dinner and watching TV many times in the past. Remember, however, that you do have a choice. You could choose to take a walk after dinner instead of watching TV.

If you have been inactive for a while, you probably have many cues that trigger inactivity and few that trigger action.

To become active regularly, you must add positive activity cues to your life. Over time, the cues will lead to activity, and you will develop new habits that become more and more automatic.

Ask: What are some positive activity cues that you could acquire?

Let's begin by visualizing where you live once more.

Ask: What could you add to the living room that would prompt you to be active? What about the bedroom? The kitchen?



Refer participants to the "Activity Cues" handout in the Participant Notebook.

Offer these examples of positive cues:

- In living room or bedroom:
 - Keep exercise shoes, bag, and equipment in sight (not in the closet).

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- Hang an activity calendar and a graph of your activity in a visible place.
- Keep a stationary bike or exercise mat in front of the TV.
- Hang a photo or poster of an outdoor scene or people being active.
- Subscribe to a health or exercise magazine, and keep it visible.
- Buy a home exercise video, and leave it on the coffee table or TV as a reminder to use it.
- Put a note on the TV reminding you that a half hour of TV time could be used for a walk instead.
- In the kitchen:
 - Post on the refrigerator motivational photos, outdoor scenes, or reminders to be active.
- In the bathroom:
 - Post a reminder on the mirror to be active during the day.
- In the garage:
 - Keep the car in the garage. Maybe you will choose to walk to the neighbor's house (or store) instead of driving.
 - Keep exercise shoes, bag, and equipment in the front seat of your car.
 - Keep a bicycle in working condition and ready to ride. Store it in a visible place.

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Removing Inactivity Cues

Notes

Present: These are some cues at home that you could remove:

- To watch less TV:
 - Keep it behind closed doors in a cabinet.
 - Do an activity while you are watching.
 - Get rid of the TV!
- To avoid having a pile of stuff on the bottom stair:
 - Climb the stairs each time you have something that needs to be taken up. All those steps add up to meaningful action.

Ask: Can you think of any other non-activity cues that could be removed from your home? (Ask for examples that focus on positive actions participants could take.)

Open responses.

Ask: What are some positive cues that you could add to your workplace?

Open responses.

- Keep your walking shoes in a visible place in your office.
- Put a note on your office door or computer reminding you to take a walk during your lunch break.
- Set an alarm on your watch or computer calendar to remind you to take a walk.

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- Make a regular, daily appointment with yourself to be active. Put the appointment in your calendar. Keep your appointments with yourself; they are as important as appointments with other people.

Present: There are cues to help you be active that are not necessarily tied to your surroundings.

- Set up a regular date to be active with a friend or family member. Committing to others can help you be active even when you are not feeling motivated or energetic.
- Use a timer or alarm on your watch to remind you to be active.

Ask: Can you think of any other activity cues that we have not discussed?

Open responses.

In summary, it takes time to break old habits and build new, healthier ones. But it can be done! The most important steps are to get rid of problem cues and add new ones that will help you lead a healthier life.

You can make food and activity cues work for you, not against you.

Session 8: Take Charge of What's Around You

Part 4: Wrap Up and To-Do List

Estimated time: 10 minutes

To Do Next Week



Notes

Ask if there are any questions about what was covered during this session.

Present: Here is what I want you to do for next week:

First, let's make a plan for each of us to remove one problem food cue from our lives.

Activity:

-  **Refer** participants to the "To-Do Next Week" handout in the Participant Notebook.
- Think of one problem food cue that you will get rid of before next week, and any problems you might have doing so, and how you will solve them.
-  **Write** down those problem cues and what you will do to remove them.
- Think of one positive cue for being more active that you will add. What will it be, and what will you need to do to add it? Again, what problems might you have, and how will you solve them?

For next week:

- Continue to find ways to be physically active. Most of you have slowly built up to the 150 minutes a week for physical activity.
- Remember, the time can be broken into smaller segments of 30, 20, or even 10 minutes.

As always, keep track of your weight, eating, and activity, and do your best to reach your goals.

Session 8: Take Charge of What's Around You

Closing

Notes

Summarize the key points:

- We looked at the kinds of food and activity cues that trigger us to behave in an unhealthy way.
- We talked about ways to change those cues, by avoiding those that stand in the way of our goals and replacing them with positive cues.
- We worked on a plan for how to begin removing negative food and activity cues.

Close: You have made it through the first half of this program and are doing well. Keep up the good work.

Our next session is called “Problem Solving.” We will be talking about problems and how we can solve them through a set of five steps.

Ask participants whether they have any questions before closing the session.

Make announcements about time or location changes, contact information, and any other issues.

After the session:

- Write notes on successes and (when necessary) recommend changes in the participants’ “Food and Activity Trackers” from Session 7.
- Write the physical activity minutes recorded in the participants’ “Food and Activity Trackers” in your Lifestyle Coach’s Log.
- Use the “Notes and Homework” page at the end of this guide to write notes about the session.

