

# H.A.L.T. the B.S.

## HUNGRY

Your stomach is empty and blood sugars are low, so your body sends urgent signals to hurry up and find food.

Eat! Really. If you feel your energy level dropping start with a snack, wait 20 minutes, & then re-assess your hunger.

## ANGRY

Anger and frustration trigger instincts for aggression. Anger is often a “cover” emotion, which occurs when we are provoked & underneath the anger are other feelings of embarrassment, disappointment, etc.

Physical activity can sometimes decrease emotional intensity. Try journaling to get at other emotions, which may be covered up. Talk it out with someone you trust. Take a breather if necessary.

## LONELY

Loneliness and/or disappointment can feel overwhelming setting you up to seek comfort from food; bingeing helps you feel less alone, but ultimately makes you feel more isolated.

Relationships are like food, we need them to survive! Reach out to those you are close with to remind you people care. Practice small acts of kindness to feel more connected. Distinguish between being alone & feeling alone.

## TIRED

When you're sleep deprived, appetite hormones become dysregulated, and your brain sends messages to the gut asking for energy in the form of quick sugars (carbs). When we are over-tired, our cognitive skills aren't as sharp, making it harder to use our executive functioning skills to decide what we are really “hungry” for.

Take a nap! There is no time that is too early to go bed if your body needs the rest. Practice good sleep habits at night (regular bedtime, stop screen time 60mins before bed).

## BORED

Boredom comes as a result of a lack of engagement from within, when we have trouble being in touch with internal thoughts/feelings & we tend to blame the environment. Can be related to procrastination, can sometimes seem like helplessness, wandering thoughts, restlessness, or stimuli seeking; eating out of boredom may be related to reduced dopamine in the brain.

Do something stimulating – now's the time for a solo dance party – to try & get your energy up. Reach out to other people, change your surroundings (take a walk outside), start something new (crafting, book, watch a new show), or try and sit with the feeling & be in a mindful/meditative place.

## SCARED/SAD/STRESSED

Here, feeling scared is most closely related to a panic type anxiety response. Your body goes into a fight or flight state & stress hormones are released. Sadness is emotional pain related to feelings of despair, loss, sorrow & helplessness. Stress is a physiological response to a stressor – it's the way your mind/body respond to a challenge.

The three “S”s have one thing in common – feeling powerless against them. Allow yourself to feel the feelings; there is no good reason to deny them (cry if you need to). When scared, we tend to imagine the worst & underestimate our ability to cope; identify what you are really afraid of & then use “and then what would happen” tool to talk yourself beyond the panicked place. If sad, write down what is bothering you, reach out for support, do something calming (breathing exercise, yoga, take a bath). With stress, evaluate the big picture & break it down into smaller parts that are manageable as a way to feel less overwhelmed. Avoid, alter, adapt or accept the stressful situation.

REMEMBER: It is not what happens to us, but how we respond to what happens to us. Do not fear feelings. Feelings change and pass, they aren't permanent.