

# Four Ways to Cope with Anxiety and Food Disorders

Vacation is supposed to be stress-free. No responsibility, no worries, no cares. The last thing you wanna worry about is what goes in your mouth.

*"Where are we gonna eat?"*

*"Should I try to eat healthy?"*

*"It's vacation, I deserve to splurge."*

*"What if people judge me?"*

*"How much weight will I gain on this trip?"*

You know the drill... 🙄 A lot of people struggle silently, not realizing the deep connection between their mental health and eating habits. Welp, **you're not alone**, friend. Being "overweight," living with an eating disorder and/or anxiety, is NOT uncommon.

I'm serious! (I can literally hear your eyes rolling.) I'm not just telling you what you want to hear. I've got no reason to lie.

But guess what?

👉 There's help.

👉 There's support.

👉 And there are friends who understand. (Like me!)

Realizing there's a relationship between anxiety and eating disorders is a great place to start. Anxiety can trigger eating disorders as a way to escape or a form of control.

Then, the physical stress of eating can exacerbate that anxiety. **So how can we get off this never ending roller coaster?** Let's look at four strategies to build a strong foundation to manage your relationship between anxiety and food disorders.

1. **Mindfulness and meditation:** Calming and centering your mind can significantly reduce anxiety levels and improve your emotional well-being. Focus on the present moments and learn to accept feelings without judgment. Gain a better understanding of your eating habits and triggers to help break the cycle.
2. **Structured eating habits:** We tend to underestimate what routine, balanced meals can do for us. They stabilize glucose and reduce mood swings and anxiety. This helps prevent the urge to binge or withhold food.

3. **Therapy and support groups:** Working with a professional and joining support groups can provide the tools you need for your toolbelt! Learn how to cope with emotional distress and modify unhealthy eating behaviors.
4. **Physical activity:** Get that body movin! Who said exercise has to be “intense?” Take Scout 🐾 for a walk in the park or roll out the mat for some yoga. These simple (and relaxing!) techniques can have calming effects and help maintain a healthy relationship with how you view your body. Exercise also releases endorphins which are natural mood lifters. That’s a win-win!

Now, I’m fully aware that dealing with anxiety and food disorders often requires more than just self-help strategies, and that’s okay! It’s important to recognize when to get help. Warning signs might include:

- 🌻 Persistent worry or fear that interferes with daily activities
- 🌻 Unhealthy eating habits that negatively impact your health
- 🌻 Emotional distress related to meals or body image

Professionals can help you build a more sustainable recovery by providing tools to manage stress, advice on nutritional needs, and techniques to maintain positive/healthy habits.

And the support doesn’t end with therapy. Join a group! Find a pen pal! Let’s break the cycle so we can have the stress-free vacations we **deserve**.

Grab my hand, and **let’s do this together**.