

STOP AND THINK BEFORE CHOOSING UNHEALTHY FOODS SKIT

By Joy Turner - Massachusetts

Has anyone ever just used the word STOP to end an unhealthy action?

Here's how that could work.

We've prepared a skit showing various scenarios that we all encounter. The skit portrays Cathy confronting situations that can be hard to resist. The other characters in the skit represent parts of Cathy's brain which would like to help her attain her goal! Cathy gets to either listen to them and accept their help – or choose to continue with habits that lure her away from achieving her dreams of health and vitality.

Remember, if you hear anything during the skit that would be helpful to you, write a memory jogger either inside or outside of your personal box.

Scroll down for the skit

CAST DIRECTIONS: Please speak your parts SLOWLY and CLEARLY. Audience needs time to absorb it; so avoid the temptation to rush through your part. Anything in *italics* is spoken. The rest is instruction. It's fine to change your part up a bit if it's more comfortable for you as long as the main idea stays the same.

Joy: Holds sign SCENE ONE-HOME ALONE 3 pm *Cathy doesn't have a food plan. She doesn't realize she has mindlessly eaten about 1500 calories today.*

Cathy: (sitting, reading magazine) *Boy, I'm Tired. I bet a snack would pick me up. That chocolate cake looks good. Think I'll go get some.*

Liz: (holds up sign & speaks with authority)

STOP!

Ida: **THINK!** (pause)
IS IT REALLY HUNGER? What have you eaten so far today? Could too much food be making you sluggish? Could the food ads you're looking at be creating a craving?

Brenda: *Would a nap help? OR Sometimes a little exercise seems to pick you up.*

Cathy: *I've got a decision to make here. After stopping and thinking about it, I'm realizing just how much I've already eaten today. I think I'll look at the list I made recently of the physical and emotional rewards I receive from being on a food plan and try to get on track RIGHT NOW! And....I think I better choose something else to read. The food ads and recipes in this magazine seem to lure me towards the kitchen!*

EVERYONE MOVES OVER TO TABLE LADEN WITH FOOD

Joy: Scene 2 Buffet *With heavy eaters at an all you can eat buffet!*

Cathy: (studying buffet table) *Everything looks soooooo goooooood! I think I'll have a taste of everything!*

Liz: (hold up sign & speaks with authority) **STOP!**

Ida: **THINK!** *Taste of everything? How will you feel about that later? That table is loaded with sugar and fat.*

Brenda: *Go to the ladies room where you can think better.*

Cathy: (goes off to the side) *Wow! I needed to get away from all that food for a moment. I need to plan how to handle it when I return and everyone else is piling their plates high with the foods I love. I remember hearing the slogan: NO PLAN IS A PLAN TO FAIL.*

Brenda: *You could call or text a TOPS friend to get support. Take a moment to think about your food plan. You can go back and see what foods are on your plan that you really enjoy and choose them. This is probably a good time to try the technique you heard about in a meeting of putting your fork down between each bite so that your food will last even if others go back for more.*

Ida: *And....don't forget to drink water to help fill you up. If you're still hungry, a non-starchy vegetable or something from the salad bar without dressing could fill the hole.*

Cathy: *And, before I go back I'm taking a deep breath and visualize success! It helps to remember "A minute on the lips, a lifetime on the hips!"*

Joy: Last Scene Angry *This can happen anywhere! Beware of eating to “fix” emotions*

Cathy: *I’m so mad! How could they do that to me? I think I need some chocolate.*
(Cathy – substitute something else if you want)

Liz: (holds up sign & speaks with authority) **STOP!**

Ida: **THINK!** *What are you looking for from that food? Are you trying to pay them back for what they did? Are you Looking for comfort? Do you want to block the memory of the incident and dull the pain? Will it help you to zone out so that you don’t have to deal with it?*

Cathy: *Wow! I guess it would help me to understand why I want to grab for food. I’m an intelligent person. I know it won’t do any of the things just listed. I wonder if it would help me to recite the whole TOPS pledge. I’ll give it a try. I am an intelligent person. I will control my emotions and not let my emotions control me!*

Oh my! I guess I didn’t have to say much of it! What can I do so that my emotions aren’t controlling me?

Brenda: *Remember when you used to write out what was bothering you and afterwards it didn’t seem so strong? And, In TOPS there have been programs on dealing with unpleasant emotions through exercise. Are there any ways you can deal directly with the situation that’s bothering you? It’s going to have to be dealt with sooner or later and it’s easier to think clearly about it when your mind isn’t dulled with excess food.*

Cathy: *Boy! This is difficult. It would be much easier to drug my mind and put off dealing with it. I really want to reach my weight loss goals. I think I’ll skip the food and look for a solution.*

Liz: (holds new sign!) *Accept the challenges so that you can feel the exhilaration of victory!*

Everyone sits down except for Liz who gives them time to get settled.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Liz: *We are handing out a mini-stop sign to everyone here.
Put it where you have the most temptation like your car or refrigerator.
Try putting it on the kitchen floor at night at whatever time you choose to have
your last food for the day. Then don't cross over it.
You **CAN** (hold up sign) STOP your unhealthy habits.*

Joy: *I purposely printed the stop signs in black and white. I've found the more effort I
put into the things I try the better they work. My suggestion would be for you to
take a few minutes to color it. Those few minutes can help it to "fix" it in your
brain and help you to remember to use it.*

Liz: *Hmmmm! Does anyone notice anything about the word STOP?
It's the same letters as TOPS with the "s" at the other end.
I guess we can make a new slogan!
TOPS HELPS ME STOP UNHEALTHY HABITS!*

