

Some forms of behavior are automatic, like breathing or scratching an itch. Others, like eating are rarely automatic. Eating behaviors are the end result of a continuum or a sequence of events which are influence by your thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Defining the Continuum

Some input or cues trigger thoughts and feelings that in turn lead to some kind of output or behavior. That continuum looks something like this:

INPUT	FILTER	PROCESSING	OUTPUT
Cue	Beliefs and Attitudes	Thoughts and Feelings	Behavior

Controlling the Continuum

Using the following Continuum Exercise to keep track of your thoughts/feeling/behavior continuums. Soon, you will start to recognize patterns, certain situations, ideas and feelings that regularly set you off in search of food. And you will find more and more ways to deflect the continuum away from eating behaviors into more appropriate ones.

Continuum Exercise	
Input	What cues are particularly dangerous for me in terms of wanting to eat? What cues might be at work right now?
Filter	What negative beliefs do I hold that affect me in this situation? How could I rephrase those beliefs to allow for the possibility of success? What information could these beliefs keep me from seeing in this situation?
Processing	What am I thinking about that is making me want to eat? Could I think about something else? Or could I be thinking is a more constructive way? How do I feel right now? Bored, anxious, unhappy, angry? What can I do or think about to change these feelings?
Output	I am going to (a) eat or (b) do something more constructive and appropriate for which I will reward myself with _____

The most important thing for you to know about the thought/feeling/behavior continuum is that you can change the outcome.