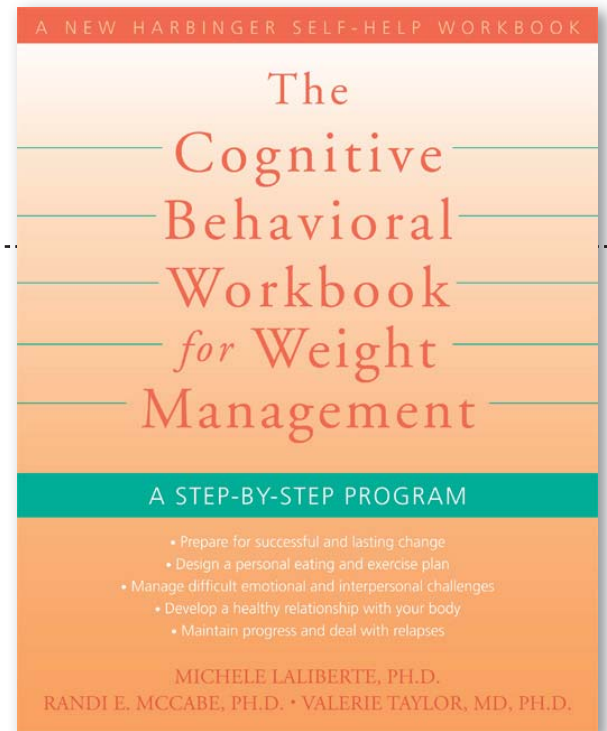


THE COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL WORKBOOK FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

A Step-by-Step Program

MICHELE LALIBERTE, PH.D., RANDI E. MCCABE, PH.D., & VALERIE TAYLOR, MD, PH.D.



We all *think* we know what we have to do to manage our weight, and blame ourselves when we don't meet the goals we have set.

In reality, we need to understand the biology behind the body's regulation of weight to achieve the control we are hoping for. And we need strategies for overcoming obstacles: the stress of daily life, emotional upsets, and people who sabotage our efforts or attack our self-esteem.

The Cognitive Behavioral Workbook for Weight Management: A Step-by-Step Program is a different kind of weight management guide that focuses on helping you stay disciplined and dedicated to your weight management goals by using cognitive behavioral therapy. This approach has been used by therapists for years to treat a diverse range of mental health conditions, and researchers have found that it also helps people make healthy changes that last.

This workbook includes exercises and worksheets to help you design a customized weight management strategy most likely to be effective for you based on the habits and lifestyle you have now. You'll set specific goals to improve your body image and your health, and follow a realistic weight management plan designed specifically for you. It is possible to feel good about yourself as you work toward a healthier lifestyle. This book will show you how.

Learn to:

- Manage situational, emotional, and interpersonal eating triggers
- Overcome body image difficulties and critical thoughts
- Make changes toward weight management that you actually enjoy
- Use support from friends and family to bolster success

FOR AN INTERVIEW REQUEST *or*
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Michele Laliberte, Ph.D., Randi E. McCabe, Ph.D.,
& Valerie Taylor, MD, Ph.D.

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Praise

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MICHELE LALIBERTE, PH.D., RANDI E. MCCABE, PH.D.,
& VALERIE TAYLOR, MD, PH.D.

“Given the lack of effective tools to assist people in their weight struggles, this book fills an important gap. It provides evidence-based strategies for weight management, addresses problematic thoughts and behaviors, and offers long-term lifestyle solutions for healthy eating, exercise, and maintaining a positive body image. This book is a valuable resource for both consumers struggling with weight issues and the clinicians who help them.”

— TRACI MCFARLANE, PH.D., C.PSYCH., STAFF PSYCHOLOGIST AND CLINICAL TEAM LEADER AT TORONTO GENERAL HOSPITAL AND ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

“This book provides an easy-to-follow, comprehensive program for losing weight and keeping it off. Unlike many books on this topic, the strategies in this book are based on proven psychological principles. I recommend this workbook to anyone who struggles to lose weight and live a healthier lifestyle.”

— MARTIN M. ANTONY, PH.D., ABPP, PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY AT RYERSON UNIVERSITY IN TORONTO, ON, CANADA, AND AUTHOR OF *WHEN PERFECT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH*

“Changing the way you think is key to losing weight and eating more mindfully. This straightforward, easy-to-read guide helps illuminate the thoughts and behaviors that may be standing in the way. You’ll learn essential skills that will take you far on your journey toward a healthier you!”

— SUSAN ALBERS, PSY.D., AUTHOR OF *50 WAYS TO SOOTHE YOURSELF WITHOUT FOOD, EATING MINDFULLY, AND EAT, DRINK, AND BE MINDFUL*

“This is a fantastic tool for individuals seeking to find an exit ramp from the freeways and cloverleaves of dieting, weight regain, and more dieting. Completing the program laid out in this book will help almost anyone get their life and eating habits back under control, determine a long-term path toward a healthier lifestyle, and develop a more contented acceptance of their own body. It should be a required tool in every weight management clinic on the planet, and I feel strongly that it should be required reading for every family practice physician and health care provider in North America.”

— JULIE JANEWAY, AUTHOR OF *THE REAL SKINNY ON WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY* AND COAUTHOR OF *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OBESITY*

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Excerpt

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MICHELE LALIBERTE, PH.D., RANDI E. MCCABE, PH.D.,
& VALERIE TAYLOR, MD, PH.D.

FEELING FAT

If you are dissatisfied with your body because of your weight, you may have days when you struggle with feeling fat—in other words, days where you feel particularly ugly or unattractive. We have given you strategies for catching and challenging your thoughts on these days. We have also urged you to avoid checking behaviors, even on the days when the urge may be stronger. And, in fact, we have pushed you to deliberately engage in behaviors that will no doubt trigger you to feel fat. You have a lot of tools to deal with these difficult times. We want to end your work on body image by challenging you to question the real meaning of “feeling fat.”

But What if I Am Fat?

Despite what you might think, the experience of feeling fat actually has little to do with your actual body size. People of all sizes walk around feeling at home in their bodies. Even those whose weight interferes with their mobility can experience frustration or fatigue related to their weight, but this is not necessarily what we mean by “feeling fat.” Instead, we mean a sense of shame, anxiety, and despair because you believe that your body is unacceptable due to its size or shape. It is a judgment, and it is made by people of every size and shape, even people with nearly “perfect” bodies by today’s standards (although larger people face more messages that reinforce the belief that they should be ashamed of their size). But, regardless of your size, you have every reason to feel good about yourself and the body that is natural for you.

Can You Really *Feel* Fat?

Many of our colleagues, particularly those who work in the area of eating disorders, would argue that you cannot *feel* fat; they would say that you can only *think* that you are fat. While this may be technically true, it is not the experience of the clients we work with. Many of them believe that feeling fat is not simply a thought or evaluation about their size; it is an actual sensation. Regardless of their actual body weight, they claim that they can feel the fat on their bodies, their cells bloated up, and their fat hanging, jiggling, rubbing—even when they are sitting still. This is true for both the smallest and the largest of our clients, and it is related more to their distress than to their body fat. Feeling fat sure feels real, even though it can change from day to day, hour to hour, and minute to minute. The fact that the feeling can change when your body remains the same suggests that, regardless of your size, you need to see the feeling as questionable and wonder why you are feeling this way today, now.

What Happens When Life Leaves You Feeling Fat?

When life triggers you to feel bad about yourself (for example, to feel unlikeable or a failure), it can also trigger you to feel fat if the two feelings are connected in your mind. If you struggle with body dissatisfaction, however, the connection between feeling fat and your life may not be obvious at the time. Instead, you may simply feel fat and never stop to question the validity of this feeling. In this case, you are likely to spiral into more negative thoughts about your body, experience an escalation of checking behaviors, and want to avoid being seen. Feeling fat is also likely to leave you much more sensitive to the “obvious” triggers we listed earlier—in other words, you are more likely to feel that your clothes are tighter or to feel sensitive to the remarks others make about their weight and so on.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED

On the other hand, feeling fat can be a useful signal to you to pay attention to your life. It is not a pleasant signal, but it may have something valuable to tell you. One of our clients described finding herself standing in front of her kitchen sink peeling a carrot and feeling fat. Once she “caught herself” in the feeling, she knew in a flash that she was feeling this way because she was anxious about starting a new job that evening and doubting she would be liked or successful. Another client, who found herself struggling with the feeling she was eating too much and feeling fat all the time, was able to recognize that these feelings had only become strong when her life got too busy and she started falling behind. She had always associated feeling fat with being out of control—in this case her life felt out of control and she reacted to it by feeling fat. For both these women, the problem was not body weight. The problem was anxiety over other issues. In both these cases, the women benefited far more from addressing the real problem than they would have from reacting to feeling fat.

Helping You to Benefit from Feeling Fat

It may be strange to think that there could be an upside to feeling fat when it is such an unpleasant experience. But some of life’s most useful signals are unpleasant: pain causes you to attend to something that might injure you; an irritable bowel can let you know that you are under stress; a cold sore can indicate you need more rest. Feeling fat can be a signal to pull back and consider what is going on in your life. What might be making you feel less sure of yourself in some important way? Once you identify the real issue, you can solve the real problem. You may not immediately stop feeling fat, but the feeling will no doubt disappear as you successfully address the real concerns in your life. In the next week, use your notebook to track the instances in which you feel fat. Note any obvious triggers, but also consider whether life is making you feel unsure of yourself. Then set out to problem solve the real issue.

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