



The Good Mood Diet™ 12-Week Discussion Guide

Week 1. It's All About How You Feel

Discussion Points:

- How do you feel? Emotionally? Physically? Do you know how you feel?
- What makes you feel good?
- What do you do to make yourself feel better?
- Check off which of the following activities are things that you already do to feel good:

Listen to music
Play with a pet
Play music
Play games
Sing
Read

Talk with friends
or family
Pray or participate in spiritual
activities
Spend time with loved ones
Drink a cup of tea
Spend time alone

Watch the sunset
or sunrise
Travel
Stay at home

- What do other people in the group do to make themselves feel good?
- Check off your favorite foods on the **Feel-Great Foods** list in *The Good Mood Diet*.
- Each member of the group should report on their favorite foods on the list.

Action Items This Week:

Think about how to incorporate more feel-good activities into your days.
Start adding your favorite foods from the Feel-Great Foods list back into your diet.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.



Week 2. Throw Away Guilt

Discussion Points:

- How much time do you spend thinking negatively about food?
- If someone handed you that amount of free time, what would you do with it?
- Imagine yourself guilt-free. You no longer punish yourself for eating food on the Feel-Bad Foods list. Picture yourself at a party thoroughly enjoying and savoring each bite, and fully participating in the celebration. How does this feel?
- Next, think about the next meal that follows this celebration. If the party was at mid-day, plan out all the foods you still **NEED** to eat that day. If the party was a dinner, plan out your full breakfast the next morning.
- Imagine yourself eating those meals. Don't skip anything.
- How does this scenario make you feel?
- Do you think you can really do it?
- What comments does the group have?

Action Items This Week:

Think about what you **NEED** to eat, not what you can't eat next.

When you attend a party or celebration, or even if you just choose to eat a good from the Feel-Bad Foods list, throw away the guilt. Enjoy it, savor it. Then go back to thinking about what you still **NEED** to eat.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal you that you have for the coming week.
- Next week bring an item from your pantry to your **Good Mood Diet Club** meeting.



Week 3. Supermarket Strategies

Discussion Points:

- How much time do you spend thinking negatively about food?
- Are you a shopper who plans and shops with a list, or are you a spontaneous shopper?
- Do you shop alone, or do you have children with you when you shop? Which do you prefer and why?
- Do you already know some solutions to the issues raised in the previous questions? What are they?
- What solutions can others in the group offer?

In order to relieve the stress of supermarket shopping, you need to have a plan before you go. This way you know what you're going to buy and what you're going to spend. If you face an impulse purchase while you're in the store, you can make a decision from a position of knowledge, rather than ignorance.

- Choose one person to read aloud the "Develop an Awareness of Supermarket Route..." in Chapter 4 of **The Good Mood Diet**. Pay particular attention to the information on reading and understanding a nutrition label in the "Beware the added sugar in processed foods" section, also in Chapter 4.
- Look at the nutrition labels on the foods that you brought with you from your pantry this week. How do they size up? Would they be on the Feel-Great Foods list or the Feel-Bad Foods list?
- A successful supermarket shopping trip takes having a bottom line: knowing how far you're willing to push your bottom line and when you're planning on pushing it. This is particularly important when you shop with children.

Action Items This Week:

Develop a guideline or strategy for your shopping list, and for your impulse buys. Write it down and follow it the next time you shop. Report back to the group on your results.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.



Week 4. Are You Exercising?

Discussion Points:

- Are you exercising each day? If so, what are you doing and for how long? How do you feel after exercising? How do you feel overall?
- If not, how do you feel about not exercising? What do you think is stopping you?
- Have you been using a pedometer? If not, is there a reason you haven't bought one or used it?
- Have everyone in the group report their experience so far.

Below are some ways to include exercise into your daily routine. Identify which one(s) you are doing or could do:

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|---|---|
| Walk/bike ride with spouse or kid | Get a personal trainer |
| Walk with co-workers at breaks/lunch | Read magazine on cardio equipment |
| Walk/bike ride with a friend | Sign up for lessons to learn a new sport |
| Take the stairs when possible | Go dancing or dance at home |
| Go to bed earlier, rise earlier to exercise | Run around with your kids |
| Divide exercise up throughout the day | Go hiking |
| Join a gym | Walk around a new park in town every week |
- Read the tips below on how to follow-through with exercise and check the ones that you are doing or are willing to do:
 - Schedule time for exercise in your daily planner
 - Make it a priority, a non-negotiable item for the day
 - Find a partner to exercise with and commit to meeting with them daily/weekly
 - Prepay for gym/lessons/personal trainer
 - Go to bed early (get more sleep!)
 - Plan – eat appropriate foods before exercise (for example, don't eat a huge meal)
 - Make a goal and commit to an event to meet that goal (for example, a 5k run)
 - Wear a pedometer

Action Items This Week:

Think about how good you will feel if you follow through with your exercise goals this week.

Make an exercise goal for the week. Pick a strategy to help you reach your goal.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week

(can be the same as your exercise goal for the week).



Week 5. Plan — Be and Feel Successful

Discussion Points:

- Do you plan your meals for each day or week in advance? If not, why?
- Think of other areas in your life that you regularly plan for (how to get to and from work, making a presentation, when to fit in a phone call, etc). Do you think you would be successful if you didn't plan for these situations?

Eating to feel great is easiest when you plan ahead. It can make life less stressful because when your body and brain are hungry, you already have what you need to eat.

- Open your books to Chapter 1 and the “Plot your WHAT and WHEN strategy” section and have a group member read the first 5 or so paragraphs.
- What is a Good Mood snack you can prepare in advance and enjoy during the day?

Plan for Social Situations and Feel Great

- How often do you go to events hungry when you know there will be food? What usually happens? How do you feel during and afterward?
- Do you usually focus on the purpose of the event and talking with the people there? When that happens, how do you feel?

You can be successful in any setting as long as you plan ahead. Feed your brain with Feel-Great Foods before you go and then you won't have to fight the physical need and craving to be fed. This way you can snack on something that looks delicious if you want to and enjoy it because you have already fed your brain.

Remember what the purpose of the event is and what you want your focus to be on – whether it's networking, catching up with old friends or whatever you want it to be.

- What is a Good Mood snack or small meal you could enjoy eating before going out?

Action Item This Week:

Think of the next event/party on your calendar and figure out what you want your focus to be for that event.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.



Week 6. How do you measure success?

Discussion Points:

- What's happening with your clothes since starting The Good Mood Diet?
- How is your skin looking? Has it changed?
- How does your hair look? Healthier? The same?
- Are you using a scale? If so, how often are you using it? Is it a motivator? A hindrance?
- Open your books to Chapter 7, the section "Consider yourself an eater, not a dieter" and have a group member read that section.
- Have you considered yourself a success when you have indulged earlier in the day but still ate what your brain and body needed for the rest of the day? If not, can you now see how that is truly a success, not a failure?

There are many ways to measure success. For some reason many of us focus on the number on the scale. If you are doing this diet successfully, the scale may not be a good measure for success. Think about other components of your life – what has changed? ***How you measure success is completely up to you.*** You can focus on your appearance, your clothes, how you feel, the positive comments you receive from others, eating an egg everyday – ***whatever you experience that makes you feel successful!***

Have everyone tell how they are measuring their success.

- It is important to continually check in with how you are feeling to maintain and increase self awareness – how do you feel?
- Think about how you felt before beginning the Good Mood Diet. Has there been a change?
- Have everyone describe how they feel and if it has changed for them in these past 6 weeks.

Action Items This Week:

Decide how you measure success, write it down and place it next to your bed. Every morning wake up, read it, and be reminded of what a success you are.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.



Week 7. Money-Saving Tips Learned

Discussion Points:

- Are you aware of what you spend on food?
- Do you try to make the most of your dollar?
- Do you have any tips you can explain to the group?
- Have each group member describe money savings tips they have used.

Listed below are some money-saving ideas. Have you tried any of these?

Check local grocery ads to find out what's on sale and/or to clip coupons
Buy in bulk when possible and freeze portions of perishable items (meat, bread, etc)
Buy frozen berries instead of fresh, if cheaper, and buy in bulk
Eliminate purchases of feel-bad foods that you don't love
When buying fresh produce, only buy enough for 2-3 days at a time

- Do you have ideas in addition to this list?
- Have each group member explain any ideas they have in addition to this list.

Action Items This Week:

When you grocery shop this week, find at least one money saving option and use it!
Report back to the group next week.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.



Week 8. Food as Fuel

Discussion Points:

- When you think of food, what words come to mind? Are these the same words/thoughts you had prior to starting the Good Mood Diet?
- Have you most often thought of food as a friend or enemy? Is this changing? How?
- Have each group member say the words/thoughts that came up for them.

You have read in the book that you **NEED** to feed your brain to feel great. Are you able to see how food is truly a fuel for your brain and body? Share an experience of feeling food as fuel with the group.

- In addition to feeling better physically from fueling your body with Feel-Great Foods, what other changes are you noticing about how you perceive food?
- Do you feel guilt as often today? If it has changed, how does that affect your overall mood?
- Is it easier to allow yourself to have and enjoy an occasional food you love?
- Have group members report on perception changes they are having with food.

Action Items This Week:

Pay attention to occasions this week where you feel the benefits of fueling your body with Feel-Great Foods.

If you feel down or unmotivated this week, use these experiences to pick yourself up and remember that you need to eat to feel great.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.
- Tell the group about the money saving tip you used last week.



Week 9. Your Good Mood Kitchen

Discussion Points:

- Refer to the list in Chapter 4, under the heading “Equip your kitchen to facilitate Good Mood eating and planning.”
- Which of these items do you regularly use?
- Are there items on this list that you don’t have but would like to have? If so, why haven’t you gotten it/them yet?
- If it’s due to cost constraints, have you tried online used-goods sites?
- Have the group share what items are their favorites from this list.
- If you were creating a list of Good Mood cooking supplies, are there items you would include that are not on the list in the book?
- Have those in the group with other ideas of items for a Good Mood kitchen share what the items are and how they have helped. Remember you are the experts!
- Do you use measuring cups and spoons?
- If not or if you are eating out – do you know how to eyeball portions?

Here are a few simple examples for estimating portion sizes by using your hand as a visual tool:

The size of your thumb 1 tablespoon

The size of your palm 3-4 ounces

The size of your fist 1 cup

- Are there other ways you’ve learned to estimate portion sizes? How?
- Have group members share these with everyone.

Action Items This Week:

If you eat out, practice eyeballing portions and then ask your server what the actual portion size is – see how accurate you were.

If you don’t eat out this week, eyeball a portion and then measure it and see how close you are.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.
- Tell the group about one experience you had last week with feeling “fueled” by your food.



Week 10. Nix Nighttime Snacking

Discussion Points:

- Do you struggle with the desire to snack after dinner (on top of your fabulous nightly cocoa)?
- Why do you think this is?
- Ask yourself, “Am I eating everything I need to eat each day or am I skipping important food group items – leading to hunger late in the evening?”
- Are you bored? Have you ever paused before snacking and asked yourself why?
- What time are you going to bed?
- Have everyone in the group who craves snacking at night talk about why they think it happens for them.
- What are some ways to curb snacking when it’s not due to hunger?
- Each member come up with 2 ways to stop unnecessary nighttime snacking and share them with the group.

Below is a list of ideas that you may have already mentioned or may be new ideas. Identify and tell the group which one you will try if the urge to snack arises.

Brush your teeth right after dinner	Go to bed (sleep or read, if not sleepy yet)
Chew gum	Call a friend
Drink a glass of water	Go for a short walk
Play solitaire	
Read a book or magazine	
Wash the dishes right after dinner	

It may be that you simply enjoy having a light nighttime snack (in addition to the hot cocoa). If so, make room for it by eating a bit less during the day (for example, one less protein and one less bread serving) so you can enjoy the snack without going overboard.

Action Items This Week:

Pay attention to your patterns at nighttime this week. How do you feel? If you have a craving, try one of your new ideas to change perspective on the urge to snack.

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.



Week 11. Favorite “Feel Great” Recipes and Foods

Discussion Points:

- Based on your experience so far, which component of the Good Mood Diet has impacted how you feel the most?
- Which of the “Instant Good Mood Food Checklist” foods (refer to personal log or Appendix B to refresh your memory if necessary) do you consistently have everyday?
- Have each member report what has affected them the most about the Good Mood Diet.
- Of all the Feel-Great Foods which is your favorite to eat? In what ways do you prepare it? What other foods do you combine it with?
- Have each group member talk about their favorite food.
- What is your favorite Good Mood Diet recipe?
- Why is it your favorite recipe? Is it the taste? How it makes you feel? The preparation?
- Everyone share about their favorite recipe to the group.
- Are there any foods you would like to incorporate more often in your Good Mood Diet but don't know how? Let the group know.
- Does anyone in the group have ideas for this food to make it Good Mood-friendly?

Action Items This Week:

Type up your favorite Feel Great recipe (unless it's one in the book) and email it to your group members.

Try a favorite recipe of one of the other group members!

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.
- Let the group know if you had a craving last week at nighttime and what you did to deal with it.



Week 12. Are You Feeling Successful?

Discussion Points:

During week 6 our discussion was about how successful we were feeling and on ways to feel successful. Reflect on how you felt then.

- How do you feel now? Has it changed in the past 6 weeks? Since you started the Good Mood Diet?
- Do you feel successful?
- How do you feel successful?
- Do you remember the various ways to feel success from the group's previous discussion? Let's recall that now.
- Have the group reiterate what they remember from the previous discussion on ways to measure success.

What are you doing with the scale? Do you weigh yourself? If so, how often? If you are weighing yourself more than once a week, why? Body fluctuations occur day-to-day and as a result, offer varied results. If you truly want to see if your weight has changed, weigh yourself once a week at about the same time of day. Can you do this?

- How do your clothes fit?
- Have you been receiving positive comments from others?
- How is your skin and hair?
- What else do you notice?
- Have each group member tell which measure of success they feel the most.

Don't forget that it can be hard to see the changes in ourselves, since we are with ourselves every day and some changes occur slowly and are not immediately visible. Look back at yourself as you were and remember how you felt on day one of the Good Mood Diet. Now see yourself today. Does that help?

Action Items This Week:

Every night think back on your day and pick out what made you feel successful for that day – was it how your pants fit, what you ate or drank, the glowing of your skin, keeping your cool during a stressful event?

Before You Leave:

- List one success that you had last week and one goal that you have for the coming week.