

Master your cravings

From impulse to intent. A practical guide to understanding and rewriting your eating patterns.

by Sandrine Fuentes, NLP and hypnotherapy practitioner

General information, not personal healthcare advice. If you are unwell, pregnant, or under medical care, speak to your GP before changing how you eat.

Why you have cravings

Cravings are not a sign of weakness. They are learned brain patterns. When your nervous system feels stressed or unbalanced, it looks for the fastest route back to feeling steady, and sugar is fast.

The good news is that these habits can be rewired, and the choice can become a conscious one.

1. Spot your craving environment

- Where do cravings hit most often? Home, work, the commute?
- When do they appear? Morning, the afternoon slump, late at night?
- What situations or people trigger them?

Action: notice when and where cravings happen, and keep tempting foods out of sight. Awareness is your first tool.

2. Identify the triggers

Triggers are the sparks that start the craving chain. Ask yourself:

- What happened right before this craving?
- Am I stressed, bored, tired, or anxious?
- Did I see, smell, or think about the food?

Action: keep a simple craving log. Write down the time, the trigger, and the situation.

3. Seeing, smelling, tasting: the craving experience

Cravings show up through your senses:

- Images in your mind
- An inner voice ("I need this now")
- Sensations: taste, smell, tension, restlessness

Action: pause and describe your craving in detail. Just noticing it can reduce its grip.

4. Recognise the emotional layer

Cravings often mask emotions:

- Stress or anxiety, and you are seeking comfort
- Boredom, and you are seeking distraction
- Loneliness, and you are seeking reward

Action: ask what you are really feeling. Naming the emotion separates it from the food.

5. Tune in to your body

Notice the physical cues:

- A tight stomach or jaw
- Salivation, or the taste arriving before the food does
- Fidgeting, or shallow breathing

Action: take three deep breaths and scan your body from head to toe. Noticing opens the door to a different choice.

6. Choose better

Quick shift strategies, for the moment it arrives:

- Pause, and breathe.
- Reframe: "I see you, craving. I can choose what is best for me."
- Redirect your attention. Change the scenery, go into another room or outside, sip water, look around you.
- Five minutes of guided meditation, with an app ready on your phone.
- Visualise the outcome of both choices.
- The NLP trick: picture the craving, then shrink the image in your mind.
- Tap it out with EFT.

How to use EFT, or tapping

Tapping on specific points while repeating a calming phrase is something I use with clients, and many of them find it takes the edge off a craving quickly. Try it and see what happens for you.

An example: "Even though I have this craving, I deeply and completely love and accept myself."

Cravings come in waves. They build, they peak, and they ease, usually a good deal faster than they feel as though they will. You are waiting out a wave rather than winning a fight.

Work with me directly

If this guide has helped you understand your cravings differently, but you feel there may be something deeper keeping the pattern in place, we can explore it together.

I work one-to-one using NLP and hypnotherapy to help people understand and change the subconscious patterns behind habits, stress, emotional overwhelm and behaviours that can feel difficult to shift through willpower alone.

Sessions are personalised to you, helping you create change at the source and move towards greater calm, clarity and balance.

Sandrine Fuentes

NLP & Hypnotherapy Practitioner

Website: sandrinefuentesconsulting.com

Email: contact@sandrinefuentesconsulting.com

Your craving plan

Work through this now, while you are calm. A plan made in the middle of a craving comes too late to help. Screenshot this page on your phone, or print it, and keep it where you will find it.

MY PAUSE CUE

MY REFRAME PHRASE

MY REDIRECTION ACTION

MY MINDFULNESS TOOL

MY VISUALISATION

MY NLP OR EFT TOOL

Keep going with this

Cravings are the doorway. What sits behind them, usually, is a nervous system that has been running too hot for too long, and a body that has been asking for something you have not had time to hear.

You are already in the work. Come back to these seven steps whenever a craving arrives and you want to meet it with something other than willpower, and bring what you notice to the group.

If food feels harder than this

Cravings are ordinary. But if your relationship with food feels distressing, secretive, or out of your control, this guide is not the right tool and you deserve better support than a PDF. Please speak to your GP. Beat, the UK eating disorder charity, runs a helpline on 0808 801 0677 and there is no threshold of severity you have to meet before ringing it.