A top-down photograph of a teal ceramic coffee cup filled with dark coffee, sitting on a matching saucer. The cup and saucer are placed on a light-colored, textured fabric napkin. To the left of the cup, a wooden scoop is filled with dark brown coffee beans, with some beans scattered around it on a dark grey surface.

Crushing Cravings

for a Radical Metabolism

Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, CNS

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Greetings everyone!

What is one of the top reasons diets fail? Cravings. The key to losing weight and keeping it off is to decrease hunger while increasing metabolism—but that's the opposite of what many diets do!

The secret to beating cravings lies in hormones and brain chemistry. When your body believes it's starving, you experience increased hunger and cravings, especially carb cravings, and you're more likely to overeat. Rebound weight gain is actually fat gain, and fat requires fewer calories than muscle—which is why the average dieter gains 11 pounds for every diet they go on. That's why *Radical Metabolism* stands out above the rest!

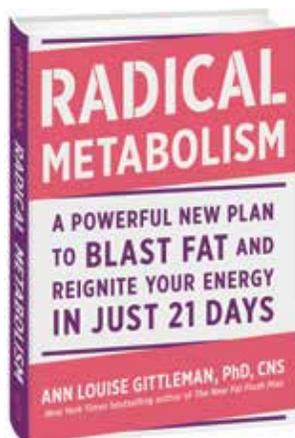
The *Radical Metabolism* plan uses science instead of willpower to decrease your hunger while increasing your metabolism. With the right combination of healthy fats, proteins, bitters, and polyphenols, you can remain satiated and energized every day.

All that said, your body will be undergoing some radical changes, including fluctuations in hormones and brain chemistry. It is perfectly normal to experience a few cravings, especially early on when your body is trying to adjust, or when you're under a greater amount of stress. Cravings have more than one cause—blood sugar variations, hormones, poor sleep, stress and emotional ups and downs can all cause a temporary imbalance that sends us into the dreaded craving zone.

But fear not! Cravings are no match for the powerful tools I am about to share. From now on, if the cravings monster appears, you'll be armed and ready!

In love and good health,

-Ann Louise



CINNAMON—THE INSANELY DELICIOUS CRAVINGS-BUSTING SPICE

Cinnamon is beloved for its sweet, warm flavor and versatility for sweet and savory foods alike. But in addition to its exquisite flavor, cinnamon has medicinal uses dating back more than 5,000 years. One of the most notable is its ability to optimize blood glucose and insulin levels, which are major players when it comes to hunger and food cravings.

The most important thing to remember is, if your blood sugar is stable, then you are less likely to experience those sudden surges of hunger and food cravings.

A 2012 study showed that just one gram of cinnamon per day has blood sugar benefits comparable to oral diabetes medications.¹ In another study, an aqueous extract of cinnamon was found to have insulin-optimizing effects 20 times higher than any of the other spices tested.

Recent research reveals that this wonder-spice may trigger changes at the cellular level that result in long-lasting metabolic benefits. Cinnamon has benefits for cholesterol and triglycerides, plus additional antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. It may even offer some protection against Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease!²

Cinnamon is actually the bark of a tree. It is available in dried stick form or ground into a powder. True cinnamon comes from Ceylon and is more difficult to find in American stores than the less expensive "cassia" cinnamon. I recommend sticking with Ceylon cinnamon because most of the others contain a chemical called coumarin, which is toxic to your liver if consumed in sufficient quantities.

Look for organically grown cinnamon as it is less likely to be irradiated, and buy it in small quantities because it loses flavor and aroma quickly.

Keep your cinnamon in a tightly sealed glass container in a cool, dark, dry place. Use half a teaspoon or more per meal or beverage. Ground cinnamon keeps for about six months and cinnamon sticks for about a year. Ground cinnamon is wonderful on nuts, on apples or pears, in a smoothie or even added to coffee.

And speaking of coffee...

COFFEE INCREASES YOUR "FEEL GOOD" HORMONES

Many of us are eager to have that cup of coffee every morning. Many enjoy the alertness it brings, but is that all there is to it? Far from it. It turns out that coffee's effects are a real, um...eye-opener!

Coffee contains a rich mélange of phytonutrients that produce a variety of effects in the brain. Coffee affects our neurotransmitters, those chemical messengers that are intimately involved

¹AN Hoehn and AL Stockert, "The Effects of Cinnamomum Cassia on Blood Glucose Values are Greater than those of Dietary Changes Alone," *Nutr Metab Insights*, December 2012;5:77-83, DOI 10.4137/NMI.S10498. ²CL Broadhurst, MM Polansky, and RA Anderson, "Insulin-like Biological Activity of Culinary and Medicinal Plant Aqueous Extracts in Vitro," *J. Agric. Food Chem.* 2000;48(3):849-852, DOI: 10.1021/jf9904517.

in all sorts of biological processes. The reason there's a Starbucks on almost every corner is that coffee stimulates high levels of the neurotransmitter dopamine, the "bliss chemical." Caffeine temporarily blocks the breakdown of dopamine, which elevates dopamine levels in the brain. Dopamine is a key player in our motivational pathways—our brain's "reward circuits"—which heavily influence our relationship with food. This includes eating patterns, hunger, and food "addictions"—and of course, food cravings.³ Findings published in *Nutrition & Metabolism* show how dopamine plays a key role in hunger cravings and directly impacts weight gain and loss.⁴

Here's a little intro to the biochemistry of cravings: When you haven't eaten for a while, your dopamine levels fall, which triggers hunger and (potentially) overindulgence. When you feel good after eating your favorite foods, your brain is literally rewired, thanks to dopamine, to seek what gives you pleasure, and sends impulses to do it again. Coffee also boosts serotonin and endorphin levels—more feel-good chemicals.

Most people crave sweets and carbohydrates because their brains have been wired to derive comfort from those foods. Such "reward pathways" have been reinforced in our brains since childhood. Brain imaging studies reveal people's dopamine receptors lighting up when they just think about their favorite foods!⁵

The good news is, we CAN rewire ourselves! You can bump up your dopamine levels with certain dopamine-enhancing foods, and coffee is one powerful example.

Let's talk about the amino acid, tyrosine.

Tyrosine is the primary building block of dopamine. If your tyrosine levels fluctuate too widely, you can experience fatigue, energy crashes, or irritable moods that can bring on food cravings. When you're stressed, tyrosine is drawn away from dopamine production in favor of stress hormones, so it's important to consume plenty of tyrosine-rich foods, such as the following:

Fava Beans	Green tea	Spirulina
Duck	Coffee	Avocados
Chicken	Cacao	Almonds
Cornish Game Hen	Algae	
Mustard Greens	Ricotta Cheese	

Certain individuals have chronic dopamine deficiency secondary to another problem such as B6 deficiency, low stomach acid, leaky gut, adrenal fatigue, hypoglycemia, various mineral deficiencies, or heavy metal toxicity.

Besides increasing your dopamine levels, recent science has revealed some spectacular health benefits from coffee due to its special combination of antioxidants, polyphenols and other natural compounds:⁶

³ND Volkow, G-J Wang, and RD Baler, "Reward, dopamine and the control of food intake: implications for obesity," *Trends in cognitive sciences* January 2011;15(1):37-46, doi:10.1016/j.tics.2010.11.001. ⁴J Reinholz et al., "Compensatory weight gain due to dopaminergic hypofunction: new evidence and own incidental observations," *Nutrition & Metabolism*, December 2008;5(35) doi:10.1186/1743-7075-5-35 ⁵M Cheren et al., "Physical Craving and Food Addiction: A Scientific Review Paper," (2009) The Food Addiction Institute, Sarasota, Florida ⁶P Shokouh et al., "A Combination of Coffee Compounds Shows Insulin-Sensitizing and Hepatoprotective Effects in a Rat Model of Diet-Induced Metabolic Syndrome," *Nutrients* 2018;10(1):6. doi:10.3390/nu10010006.

- Improved insulin sensitivity and metabolic rate
- Reduced LDLs and inflammatory markers
- Chlorogenic acids (CGA), the most abundant polyphenols in coffee, are scientifically shown to tamp down hunger; CGA instructs your body's fat cells to burn fatty acids for fuel; *British Journal of Nutrition* research found CGA reduced blood sugar fluctuations by 50 percent in just five days⁷

Of course, you don't want to overdo coffee given the side effects of excessive caffeine (insomnia, restlessness, increased blood pressure and heart rate). But if you tolerate coffee in modest amounts, it can greatly assist your weight loss efforts.

Unable to tolerate caffeine? Here's some good news: A 2012 study found that decaffeinated coffee—even more than caffeinated coffee—decreased hunger by increasing a satiety hormone called PYY (peptide YY).⁸

If you just don't like coffee, then increase your consumption of the other high-tyrosine foods. You'll see that one is green tea! Be sure to move your body every day because even mild exercise boosts dopamine levels. And, eat blueberries! Blueberries are rich in antioxidants that protect the major areas of the brain that control dopamine production.

TAPPING—A CRAVING'S WORST NIGHTMARE

If food cravings are your nemesis, then pay close attention to the information in this section because it could change your life. Tapping has an impressive track record, often crushing cravings in a matter of minutes. Many are shocked at how effective it is. Tapping is easy to learn, and the price is right (I'm going to hook you up with the free stuff).

What is tapping?

Tapping, or EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques), involves gently tapping your fingers on certain points of your upper body while you focus mentally on a certain problem, situation or emotion. As you tap on the sequence of points, you are relaxing and focusing on the issue at hand so that your mind and body are engaged simultaneously.

EFT harnesses the power of the mind-body connection to produce profound and immediate effects on your brain and nervous system. It has been scientifically demonstrated as a safe and effective tool for treating anxiety, depression, PTSD and a myriad of other conditions—but it's also an effective way to manage ordinary stress and food cravings. EFT gives you phenomenal leverage during any weight loss program!

Just how effective are we talking?

⁷Park et al., "Effects of subacute ingestion of chlorogenic acids on sleep architecture and energy metabolism through activity of the autonomic nervous system: a randomised, placebo-controlled, double-blinded cross-over trial," *British Journal of Nutrition*, April 2017;117(7):979-984, DOI 10.1017/S0007114517000587
⁸A Greenberg and A Geliebter, "Coffee, hunger, and peptide YY," *J Am Coll Nutr* June 2012;31(3):160-166, PMID:23204152.

Epigenetics scientist and EFT expert Dawson Church teamed up with psychologist Audrey Brooks to conduct food cravings trials. After about 30 minutes of tapping, **they saw food cravings drop an average of 83 percent.**^{9 10 11}

Church and Brooks also discovered that symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression melted away. This is significant because depression symptoms are a major predictor of how likely an individual is to regain weight after dieting. Other studies have concluded that tapping works better on cravings than cognitive behavioral therapy, and the results are longer lasting.

How does tapping work?

When you tap on an acupressure point, it sends a calming signal to a part of your brain called the amygdala. The amygdala is a primitive region housing your “flight or fight response” that becomes activated by stress and negative emotions. As you know, those are common triggers for food cravings. EFT has an immediate calming effect on your amygdala, easing anxiety, increasing feelings of peace and diminishing cravings.

We associate our favorite “comfort foods” with warmth, nurturance and feelings of wellbeing. These brain pathways are reinforced throughout our lives and are often difficult to overcome. EFT has the power to break these old neural connections. When you combine tapping with positive cognitive messages, the pathway that causes the craving is severed and replaced with a new and healthier pathway. It isn’t about willpower—it’s about chemistry!

Click [here](#) to watch an excellent short video about how tapping works to calm down an overactive amygdala and quell cravings.

Resources for tapping techniques

A large amount of information (and, unfortunately, misinformation) exists on the internet about tapping. I recommend starting with the resources listed below, which will provide a solid foundation. Like any new tool, it takes a bit of practice—but you’ll get the hang of it! Even most children are able to learn and use tapping effectively.

The “tap-along” videos are extraordinarily helpful as they are interactive and give you a feel for the process—you might even START with those, before reading anything because EFT is so “experiential.” No prior EFT experience is required. Many get relief simply by doing a tap-along the moment the cravings monster rears its ugly head.

One word of caution...it is common for all sorts of thoughts, memories and emotions to emerge during tapping. If you have a history of trauma, or if you feel overwhelmed, I recommend consulting a certified EFT practitioner to assist you, instead of going solo. You can locate a practitioner [here](#).

⁹D Church, “Addictions: The Hidden Secret to End Cravings Lies Within EFT Tapping,” EFT Universe website (www.EFTUniverse.com) ¹⁰D Church and A Brooks, “The Effect of a Brief EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) Self-Intervention on Anxiety, Depression, Pain and Cravings in Healthcare Workers,” *Integrative Medicine: A Clinician’s Journal*, Oct/Nov 2010, 9(5):40-43 <https://s3.amazonaws.com/eft-academic-articles/HealthCare.pdf>. ¹¹P Stapleton et al., “A Randomised Clinical Trial of a Meridian-Based Intervention for Food Cravings With Six-Month Follow-Up,” *Behaviour Change* May 2011, 28 (1):1-16, doi:10.1375/bech.28.1.1.

Start Here!

www.eftuniverse.com EFT Universe is a trusted site with good information. Start by downloading the free EFT Mini-Manual. EFT Universe also provides access to dozens of free tapping videos and articles.

<https://www.eftuniverse.com/tutorial/eft-tutorial-center> Basic tutorial, including a handy reference chart identifying the location of key tapping points.

<http://www.jessicaortner.com> Jessica Ortner is the author of *The Tapping Solution for Weight Loss & Body Confidence*, a book I highly recommend.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YMLbvd61Cg> Short and sweet “tap-along for cravings” video with Jessica Ortner. No tapping experience required!

<http://www.thetappingsolution.com/wlvs/food-cravings.php> Thirty-minute video designed to help you understand and manage food cravings, again from Jessica Ortner. This is the third video in her free four-part video series for weight loss and body confidence.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrHRBNv8HjA> Cravings tap-along with Dawson Church. Dawson is a world-class authority on EFT, and the head of EFT Universe. This video specifically addresses holiday food cravings but can be applied to any other situation—like if you’re preparing to dine out or on your way to a party. You will enjoy Dawson’s lighthearted approach, sense of humor and famously infectious laugh!

<https://brittanywatkins.com/wp-content/uploads/Kick-Your-Cravings-with-Brittany-Watkins.pdf> Chocolate cravings tapping script (pages 5 –7), which you can adapt to the forbidden food of your choice.

Book recommendation: [EFT For Weight Loss](#) by Dawson Church.

Notes
