

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

**Everyone who took part in the Food and Mood Project Survey was asked: ‘what would be the best single piece of advice you could offer someone like yourself who was starting out to explore food and mood?’**

**This is what they said:**

There is a definite link with food and mood, but I do lapse and when I do I feel noticeably different. Once you find out your triggers you can feel so much better.

Be honest with yourself – I always believed I was a healthy eater but the reality was different. My reality now matches and I follow it, the result is a new me.

Read the The Food and Mood Handbook and try to cut out certain foods, making a diary as you do this.

Start with an elimination diet, keep a diary – listen to your body and tailor your diet to you as an individual. Try to get support from outside the family when experimenting with diet. Give any changes at least 3 months. Seek out a qualified practitioner. If it works tell your GP.

Stop eating sugars! Stop drinking alcohol (I did rarely). Stop smoking (I don't anyway). Never eat chocolate it's poisonous.

The clarity, freedom and sense of connectedness that can be achieved through making positive changes in your diet is worth all the effort. Persevere lovingly!

Try something just for one week e.g. no sugar/no caffeine. It is such an eye opener.

Be open minded and experiment for yourself – trust your body and its responses!

Notice what you've just eaten when you are in a negative mood.

It is not a 'diet' but an eating regime to adopt for life, with benefits.

Take any elimination of food slowly, expect to feel irritable etc but positive things do emerge!

Stay positive. Make a few changes. Experiment and 'stay with the programme' and it will be worth it in the end.

Have an open mind and don't make it into a chore. Enjoy it even if you only change something small.

Taking iron (I am 52) and feel more energy on iron 200mg daily. Many women I know my age are very tired and want to sleep all day (as I did) so often I recommend this. Plus better diet.

Don't go to extremes and punish yourself.

Give it time.

Drink lots of water, read The Food and Mood Handbook and cook for yourself!

I tried the dietary changes for my physical health. I found the exclusion diet very stressful and it caused a severe ulcer flare up.

Drink more water. Take a good liquid supplement.

Don't try to do it all too quickly. See a proper nutritionist. Be nice to yourself!

Meet other people on a workshop, you'll have a common bond, feel less isolated and ashamed of eating problems and get useful tips for coping.

Subtle changes to diet and nutrition can bring about very positive improvements.

Most decidedly consult a qualified professional who can guide and support.

Don't take for granted the food you consume and think more about the food choices made – this is the first step – the rest is easy!

Explore!

Go for it. You have nothing to lose.

Eat when you want to and what you want to, don't deprive yourself as changing your diet has no guaranteed or proven effect (that I know of).

Get out of the house or flat more often.

Reduce caffeine and look for balance.

You are what you eat. You cannot expect to feel well if you are not eating well.

Cut out coffee. Only eat wholemeal bread and not that much of wheat products or sugar products. Eat brown rice instead.

Do it – the benefits far outweigh the effort.

It is possible to gain mastery of your own mental and emotional well-being.

Things can get better if you do something positive.

Try it! Experiment. Read/hear good news stories and information on connections between food/mood. Drink more water!

Seek all the information you can find – from The Food and Mood Handbook, the internet and especially others trying dietary changes – what they find helpful.

Drink valerian tea when you are tense or overwrought.

Take time and listen – really listen and learn and be more aware of your body – what’s happening inside – watch – listen and experiment. Go with what gives you more energy and good feeling!

Give each trial sufficient time to get a real result.

Keep a food and mood diary.

16 years ago I had a tumour removed from my bowel. I have received no real help from my doctor although he won a major accolade in our area for his work on depression. I have been and still am totally on my own gradually finding out what suits my body (and what doesn’t). Its been along battle but although I’m only just beginning to find out things learning about The Food and Mood Project etc is helping me to find out about myself. At last I’m not alone. Thank you.

To try and explore what works for you. Which I have failed to do!

Buy The Food and Mood Handbook.

Don’t pre-judge. Be prepared to read and understand scientific papers on nutrition and then be prepared to try things – not expecting instant or miracle cures.

Drink more water.

Biological influences are part of a coherent approach to being.

Start drinking more water and treat every day as a new day.

Have faith – trust your body and your intuition and find someone who can guide and support you.

Change your diet gradually if at all possible or it could be quite a shock to your system.

Eat less and drink more water/fruit juice (but not alcohol!).

Make change gradually and enjoy exploring different foods!

Join a like-minded group.

Stick it out.

Rotate food and drink more water. Take essential fatty acids and go and see a homeopath or nutritionist to support you mentally and physically with the changes you need to make to improve your physical and mental health.

If low blood sugar: snacks and eat before bed. Read the Food and Mood Project’s ‘Food and Mood Handbook’ and also Gudren Jonssons ‘Gut Reaction’.

Consider the level of sugar in foods.

To visit a nutritionist and find out what foods suit you personally.

Ask someone to help/support, act as a mentor (who understands and not be judgemental).

Try everything.

To keep in mind that we are all individuals and our bodies and minds have been influenced by a wide range of factors which are different in all people. Also investigate with supportive GP.

Invest in yourself starting from inside out working out (i.e. make up, jewellery etc).

It's worth breaking through the comfort zones to experience a greater well being.

Have food sensitivity testing done.

Number one would have to be about eating living food to benefit our living bodies and eat as seasonally as possible. Rejoice in the new food of the week.

Eat whole foods and avoid highly refined or processed food. Drink 8 glasses of pure water every day and avoid stimulants like coffee, nicotine and alcohol.

Try it! It is such a simple and harmless way to explore and it beats taking drugs as a first choice from the doctor.

Don't give up. Whatever you find out will help long term – things will not happen overnight and there is only you that can appreciate your condition.

Consult a good nutritional therapist, and try cutting out wheat first (just in my small circle of acquaintances I've known 3 other people whose lives have been transformed by this!) (i.e. cured of anxiety, panics, depression, brain fogging as well as physical health improvements).

Be patient – improvements can be gradual.

Exploring connections informs the whole of your life, giving you insight into your whole being and can assist in you taking control of your life. I use the concept with clients and in workshops all the time.

Purchase a juicer, use as much organic produce as possible. Eat walnuts, brazils and apricots etc. Eat small amounts during the day. Drink lots of water. Replace cows milk with rice milk. And get exercising!

Eat plain, eat brown, drink water! Think healthy foods. Be happy!

Find someone who has knowledge and experience to help guide you through dietary changes and evaluation of these.

Have fun. Be curious.

Don't become obsessive – writing things down (keeping food records) can be helpful but can also take over your life!

See a nutritionist and get help with alternative foods – don't let food become a bore or an ordeal.

It's a bit of a minefield with a lot not proven. Speak to people who have tried different foods and medications.

Find and read up the information which is out there – use the internet, talk to the owners of your local health food shop.

Eat brazil nuts – drink more water – both can only be beneficial – I do tell people this already ... and recommend your publications.

Read the The Food and Mood Handbook and get started as soon as possible. It works!!! Start some exercising too!

Avoid 'uppers and downers' such as caffeine, alcohol and foods with high glycaemic index.

To attempt a very wholesome nutritional diet; to incorporate as many variables as possible; do not enter into faddy or 'specialist' diets; try to keep as nature intended and improve physical health too. 'Healthy body, healthy mind' really works.

To find group support.

Your health is dependent on the food you eat. So make time to eat the food you know keeps you healthy.

To gain knowledge about nutrition.

Read The Food and Mood Handbook.

It's worth improving your diet anyway – improved levels of energy always help you cope and lead to a more positive outlook.

Try and think about what you are eating rather than it just being a 'habit'. The better the food you put into your body the better it will perform!

Read The Food and Mood Handbook. Try zinc.

Reduce caffeine, eat apple a day, have green tea, plenty of water and very little rubbish food.

Don't listen to other people's negative views but keep exploring.

Don't give up too easily.

For me its like people with diabetes. If they don't take their medicine they're in trouble, likewise if I don't do what I now know my body needs/lacks/requires I'll be in trouble e.g. B vits, Essential Fats, and 'Serotone' (a 5-HTP supplement).

Persist in researching supplements and nutrition to find out what works for you, ask for help and support.

Trust your instincts in relation to food, your body knows.

Don't start unless you are sure you can stick out all the tests.

Try eliminating wheat, dairy products and caffeine and see the effect it has when you eat them again. In my case I had a very strong effect.

Don't give up too easily – it takes time to find out what foods are causing the problem and /or will help improve things.

Everyone is different and you must be open to any changes. Persevere!

This course of action is sensible, down to earth and - most importantly - within your control. Oh yes, and it works.

Keep a diary of diet and exercise in relation to mood and wellbeing.

Understanding one's body and how it copes with a particular food is important in finding solutions to ailments.

Stay committed to your own well being – it's worth the effort in the long run.

Persevere and be constant in your approach, it's worth it.

Making small changes can result in a big difference.

Workshops with time for people to savour food together and share healthy tips.

Check out omega 3 oils.

Persevere – I'm still battling myself.

It really is worth keeping a food diary on an on-going basis. I have yet to adopt a truly experimental approach but I am getting there!

Do not go on a diet, say 'I want to explore what I need to eat in the way I do'.

Make small changes and stick to them rather than big changes and not stick to them.

Make the changes alongside other changes e.g. more regular exercise and being assertive about demands being made on you by others – keep calm, don't take on too much and do creative things you enjoy.

Read all you can and in time you will find a common no of remedies to improve eg Nutri Centre (London) reading room or magazine articles.

Try it – unlike drugs it cannot harm you.

Accept where you are, find some help and have faith in the future.

Don't cut out the things you crave straight away. Cut down gradually and keep a diary of how foods make you feel. Take your time.

Try it and see.

Get started!

Try cutting out one thing at a time and do it totally for a month (it gets easier).

Believe that what you eat really can affect the way you feel.

If you want to change – you can! Do it!

Be organised and careful in your trials on reactions and enjoy the knowledge you gain about your personal reactions to food. Encourage others to explore the ideas too.

Persevere.

To follow the 'elimination and challenge procedure' using a diary to record.

Be sensible – make it suit your lifestyle (or change lifestyle) but don't see it as a 'diet' = a way of life now.

Believe and accept that there is a connection.

Take B vitamins and folic acid (my studies).

Keep an open mind and see what you can learn, be prepared to make positive choices to change your life.

Try it but don't be hard on yourself if you can't stick to it.

It seems almost unbelievable that food could affect your mental health – my advice is to experiment in order to identify the triggers – knowledge is power!!!

I have an interest in the relationship between moods and food and listen to Radio 4 reports with interest. I have bought the The Food and Mood Handbook but have made little time to read it, so feel unable to answer the questionnaire adequately but I am interested and hope to find out more.

You are considering this exploration as you feel a 'change' may be beneficial - you therefore have nothing to lose.

Be aware of 'habits' e.g. having a cup of coffee may bring on a feeling of need for a biscuit/cake. Sometimes you need to re-educate your body/mind.

Try it. Be relaxed about the targets you set.

Subscribe to Mood and Food newsletter.

Read The Food and Mood Handbook. Get support and plans from a dietician/herbalist.

Eat less sugary things.

Listen, learn, and act on all aspects of 'mood and food' ie workshop and talks, a hands on and social experience.

It is worth taking seriously.

Experiment, persevere.

Try it, it can work. It makes sense.

Have sensitivities/allergies tested and a kinesiologist test deficits re vitamins etc and sessions of psychotherapy to assess if emotional issues involved.

Go slowly, change 1 thing at a time and monitor the effects. Tell yourself 'if this does work I'll know quickly – if it doesn't I'll try something else'

Ask older family members if they have had food sensitivities. Keep a record of what you eat and symptoms arising.

Drink more water and exercise.

Don't get too obsessed with the idea.

Listen to what your body is telling you.

Read the The Food and Mood Handbook!

Don't dismiss any advice until you've tried it.

Think about all the possible influences on your mood, including whether you're motivated at work etc.

Don't ever start dieting. Think about the quality of the food you are eating and the effect it could have on you.

To find out about food and see what works for you.

Eating more natural foods helps you to feel better about yourself and seems to help you feel more in control – level headed.

Follow your instincts or gut feelings on what may be the problem no matter what professional and family/friends think, and try a change. Keep trying but don't make it a struggle and be kind to yourself. Do it gradually, in your own time.

Try it – you cannot lose even if it doesn't help dramatically.

I have learned many strategies to follow and gained knowledge about affects and effects food can make.

Keep trying and you will find something that you can remove from or add to your diet that will make a difference to how you feel on a day-to-day basis

Seek help from an ecologic or wholistic practitioner who is independent of disciplinary restrictions eg psychologist, dieticians

Give yourself space to listen to intuition – don't rush or do too much and be prepared to experiment.

Cut out everything and watch what happens when you reintroduce things.

**More information about this survey is available from:**

**The Food and Mood Self-help Report**

**The Food and Mood Project**

**PO Box 2737, Lewes**

**East Sussex, BN7 2GN**

**UK**

**[info@foodandmood.org](mailto:info@foodandmood.org)**

**[www.foodandmood.org/sh-report.html](http://www.foodandmood.org/sh-report.html)**

**The new Food and Mood poster ([www.foodandmood.org/poster.html](http://www.foodandmood.org/poster.html)) contains some words of advice and encouragement from these Food and Mood Project survey participants.**