

Mindful Eating Reconnecting with Our Food

In our busy lives, we often rush through our meals sometimes not even pausing to sit while we eat. This hurried way of eating certainly deprives us of the pleasure of the meal, but could it also be impacting our health? Could all of the distractions be causing us to eat more than we need? Or causing us to make less healthful choices?

The philosophy of Mindful Eating seeks to reverse this habit and transform our relationship with food. Eating is one of the few activities that allow us to engage all of our senses. Mindful eating encourages you to take time to explore your food through sight, touch, smell and sound in addition to taste. Your responses to each aspect of your food, whether positive or negative, should be acknowledged, but not judged according to the principles of Mindful Eating. Learning to be aware of physical hunger and satiety cues to decide when to start and stop eating is also a key aspect of Mindful Eating.

How do you know if you are eating mindfully? For starters, if you are eating while reading this, you are probably not eating mindfully. Eating mindfully means believing that there is no right or wrong way to eat but varying degrees of awareness surrounding the experience of food; eating experiences are unique; and that awareness should

be directed to all aspects of food and eating on a moment-by-moment basis. Mindful eating also includes an awareness of the interconnection of earth, living beings, and cultural practices and the impact food choices have on those systems.

Eating more mindfully can start with something as simple as sitting down at a table for your meals. Eliminate distractions by removing your phone, television, computer or anything else that may compete for your attention. With typical distractions removed, you will be forced to focus on what is in front of you...your food. Enjoy how it looks, smells, feels and tastes. You can even listen to how it sounds when you chew it. You may notice something new about a food you have been eating for years. Then, when you are satisfied, stop eating.

