

MINDFUL EATING ON CAMPUS

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Objectives

- Understand mindful eating for everyone
- Learn the 10 mindful eating principles
- Understand mindful eating obstacles on college campuses
- Help our students with mindful eating

Mindful

mind·ful

'mɪndfəl/

adjective

adjective: **mindful**

Conscious or aware of something.

What is Mindful Eating?

- Mindful or intuitive eating is *not* a diet
- **It is structured around the belief that people need to trust themselves enough to believe that they will eat what and how much food they need.**
- Mindful eating teaches you to listen to your inner signals of hunger and fullness, and to respond accordingly.

Mindful Eating is:

- ✓ Choosing to eat food that is both pleasing to you and nourishing to your body.
- ✓ Using all your senses to explore, savor and taste.
- ✓ Acknowledging responses to food (likes, neutral or dislikes) without judgment.
- ✓ Learning to be aware of physical hunger and satiety cues to guide your decision to begin eating and to stop eating.

Someone who eats mindfully:

- ✓ Acknowledges that there is no right or wrong way to eat
- ✓ Directs his/her awareness to all aspects of food and eating on a moment-by-moment basis.
- ✓ Is aware of and reflects on the effects caused by unmindful eating.
- ✓ Experiences insight about how he/she can act to achieve specific health goals

What does a raisin have to do with mindful eating?



Mindless eating society

- Programs, meal plans, diets teach us to ignore our own hunger
- Food advertising does not have our health as a priority
- Busy schedule, many distractions



Benefits of Mindful Eating

- Healthier weight:
 - Reduced BMI, lowered triglyceride levels, increased HDL levels, and reduced overall risk for cardiovascular diseases.
- Better body image, self love
- A diet with a higher nutritional quality
- Peace with food



Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 1) Reject the diet mentality!
 - Throw out diet books
 - Get rid of diet foods
 - Ignore fad diet claims, plans and programs



Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 2) Honor your hunger
 - Keep your body biologically fed with adequate nutritious foods
 - Once you reach excessive hunger, all intentions of conscious eating are gone
 - Learning to honor hunger helps you rebuild trust with yourself and food




Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 3) Make peace with food.
 - Give yourself permission to eat
 - Restriction usually results in overeating and overwhelming guilt




Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 4) Challenge the food police
 - Stop “good” or “bad” thoughts about food and eating habits




Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 5) Respect your fullness
 - Listen for body signals that tell you that you are no longer hungry.
 - Observe the signs that show that you are comfortably full.
 - Pause in the middle of eating a meal or a food and ask yourself:
 - How does the food taste?
 - What is my current fullness level?




Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 6) Discover the satisfaction factor
 - We often overlook the pleasure and satisfaction with the eating experience.
 - Eat what you really want in an environment that is inviting
 - By providing this experience for yourself, you will find that it takes much less food to feel satisfied



Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 7) Honor your feelings without using food.
 - Find ways to comfort, nurture, distract, and resolve your issues without using food.
 - Food will not fix feelings or solve the problem.
 - Eating for an emotional hunger will likely make you feel worse in the long run.




Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 8) Respect your body.
 - Accept your genetic blueprint.
 - It is hard to reject the diet mentality if you are unrealistic and overly critical about your body shape.



Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 9) Exercise
 - Find something you enjoy
 - Shift your focus to how it feels to move your body, rather than the calorie-burning effect of exercise.
 - Don't use exercise to cancel out a “bad” day of eating



Mindful Eating: The 10 Principles

- 10) Honor your health
 - Make food choices that honor your health and taste buds, while making you feel well.
 - You do not have to eat a “perfect diet” to stay healthy.
 - It is what you eat consistently over time that matters.
 - Progress not perfection!



Hunger Scale

- Note your hunger level each time you eat
- Rate your hunger on a scale of 1-10
- Understand that one meal or one day won't have any long-term effects on your health or weight
- Ignore outer wisdom (mealtime, calories)
- Focus on inner wisdom (hunger, fullness)

The Hunger Scale

1.	You're so hungry you'll eat anything
2.	You can't ignore your hunger and everything looks and sounds good to eat
3.	Your stomach is growling and you have hunger pangs
4.	You can feel you're getting hungry and it's time to think about what to eat
5.	You're neither hungry nor full
6.	Just right; you're satisfied but could easily eat more
7.	Totally satisfied; hunger is gone and you won't be hungry for hours
8.	You're full and don't want anything else to eat
9.	You feel stuffed and uncomfortable
10.	You're painfully full and may even feel sick

Taste meter

- Different from hunger scale
- You can have a low taste scale but still be hungry



How to Tackle Mindless Overeating

- Set up speed bumps
 - Estimate how much food you'll need to eat to reach a comfortable level of fullness.
 - Prepare, serve, or order only as much as you think you'll need.
 - Evaluate your hunger level before you eat.
 - Check your fullness level throughout the meal.



Video: Animal House - Food Fight Scene


[Video](#)





The perfect storm:

- Obstacles on campus
- +
- Obstacles in the dining halls
- +
- Pressures of college life
- +
- Personal factors




Obstacles on campus

- First time eating away from home
- First time eating all meals in large groups of people
- First time having the freedom to eat wherever and whenever (and whatever!) you want
- Social media




Obstacles on campus

- Dining hall hours
- Breaks between classes
- Distractions
- Boredom, exhaustion, stress
- Social pressure
- Environment



Dining hall obstacles

- Too many options
- All you can eat buffet
- "Honeymoon phase"
- Frozen yogurt machine!
- Social pressures



Pressures of college life

- Academic competition
- Financial loans
- Relationships
- Homesick
- Lonely
- Drug/alcohol use
- Difficult roommates
- Parents expectations



Personal factors

- Poor body issues
- History of dieting
- Perfectionism
- Eating disorder or disordered eating history
- Genetics
- Self conscious about appearance



Personal factors

- 91% of women surveyed on a college campus had attempted to control their weight through dieting
 - 22% dieted “often” or “always”
- 25% of college-aged women engage in bingeing and purging as a weight-management technique
- Findings from a national survey conducted in 2005 indicate that 3 of 10 college students are either overweight or obese

Sources: anad.org, cdc.gov

Mindful eating on campus

- Mindful eating taps into behaviors such as:
 - Overeating
 - Regulating food intake – either too much or too little
 - Ignoring hunger and satiety cues



Scenario: All you can eat buffet

- Overwhelming food choices
- Long lines at preferred food sections
- Cafeteria workers plating large or small portions
- Dessert, soda, frozen yogurt, etc.



Scenario: All you can eat buffet

- Cafeteria walkthrough before plating food
 - Plan out a well rounded meal
- Go tray-less
- Mindful dessert selections
- Speak up when it comes to portion sizes



Scenario: Eating everything on your plate

- Don't want to waste food
- Clean plate club



Scenario: Eating everything on your plate

- Start with less food
- Tune in to taste likes and dislikes you may not have been aware of
- If you don't love it, don't eat it. If you love it, savor it.
- Check in – does it still taste good?

Scenario: Honeymoon phase wears off

- Students turn to comfort foods
- Eat out more
- Eat without tasting



Scenario: Honeymoon phase wears off

- Balanced meal planning
- Find new ways of putting together meals in the cafeteria



Scenario: No time (or too much time!)

- Classes overlap with mealtimes
- Dining hall hours
- To far or too cold to get to dining hall
- Overeating while spending long amounts of time in the dining hall
- Mindlessly eating between classes, during breaks, while studying, etc.

Scenario: No time (or too much time!)

- Come up with dorm/apartment friendly meals
- Mini-meal snacks on the go between classes
- Eat until satisfied and then have a "stop" signal:
 - Gum, tea, lemon water, etc.



Scenario: Late night eats

- Roommates are up snacking
- Need food to stay awake and study
- Poor food choices late at night
- Hungry when awake late at night



Scenario: Late night eats

- Mindfully enjoy an evening snack
- Keep nutritious foods in your dorm/kitchen
- Plan for a nutritious mini-meal when late-night hunger hits



Scenario: Cooking in the kitchen

- Culinary cluelessness
- Mindlessly grocery shopping
- Overeating non-nutritious foods from lack of knowledge or planning
- Eating in front of the TV/computer
- Shopping for inexpensive, non-nutritious foods

Scenario: Cooking in the kitchen (for the first time!)

- Simple, balanced recipes
- Organized grocery shopping
- Meal planning
- Set the table for dinner, as if you're having guests



Savor the flavor

- Give distinct time allowance for a meal.
- Take several deep breaths before you begin to eat.
- Chew your food: your taste buds are on your tongue, not in your stomach.
- Taste each bite of food.
- Put your fork down between bites.
- Mid-meal time out.

Instilling mindfulness

- Mini meditations
- Eat in your seat
- Mindful for the 1st bite (or more!)
- Hunger scale check-in



Mini meditation

[Video](#)



Other coping mechanisms

- How to cope with stress, boredom, loneliness, homesickness, disordered eating, etc. without food?
 - Exercise
 - Clubs and organizations
 - Yoga/meditation
 - Counseling

Disordered eating

- Eating, not eating, purging or restricting food are ways people with food problems deal with emotions
- Overcoming eating issues involves helping people be more mindful of their feelings
- Help find healthy options for coping with feelings

Mindful eating – in college and beyond

