**Mindful Eating Guide from THE DAILY MEDITATION**



There's a mindful eating meme that shows the cookie monster and the quote. "Today me will live in the moment. Unless the moment is unpleasant, in which case me will eat a cookie!"

It's hilarious. I love that mindfulness meme. But it also makes a very important point. Because if we are honest about it, the majority of us do not practice mindful eating. We're more likely to unconsciously down a tub of ice-cream than we are to mindfully eat a raisin.

And it is a serious issue. Mindless eating causes all sorts of problems, from digestion problems to binge eating and beyond.

Thankfully, we can change. We can use mindful eating to lose weight, improve digestion, and live healthier.

In this guide to mindful eating I will show you everything you need to know to practice mindful eating and to live healthier. And you will probably want to read my guide to losing weight with meditation, too.

Let's get started.

"Today me will live in the moment unless it's unpleasant in which case me will eat a cookie"

Cookie Monster

**What Is Mindful Eating**

Mindful eating is basically [the practice of mindfulness](#) applied to food.

To be mindful means to be consciously aware. It is the state of being awake to our existence in the present moment.

Mindful *eating* simply means to eat in a conscious and awakened way.

We do this by focusing on the food and on the process of eating. So instead of binge eating while watching TV, we sit down and focus on eating. And while we are eating, that is all we are doing. We're not eating while on the phone, or eating while watching a movie. We're just eating, mindfully, consciously, and that is all.

It's simple. But its also powerful.

In a moment I will share with you some amazing research on the benefits of mindful eating. But first let me show you *how to eat mindfully.* This will transform your relationship with food, and change your health for the better.


**How To Eat Mindfully**

There really is no right or wrong way how to eat mindfully. What matters is your intention. You have to bring the right attitude to food.

There's an old quote by Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh that says, "When sitting, sit.' It's about just doing that one thing, and focusing on eat. The same can be applied to eating: When eating, eat. Focus on food and on the process of eating.

Here is a simple mindful eating exercise using chocolate as an example (you'll need a chocolate bar).

Sit comfortably and take ten deep breaths through your nose, and out through the mouth, just to calm and focus your mind.

Pick up your chocolate bar. Unwrap it. Now hold it in your hand.

Before you actually eat the chocolate, observe it. Notice it. Notice the shape, the weight, the texture. Simply be *aware* of the chocolate.

Now go to take a bite of chocolate. But move mindfully. Be conscious of the movement of your mouth as you go to bite into the chocolate bar.

Bite. And focus on the sensations involved with the food. Meditate on the texture of the food, the way it feels in your mouth, the smell (if there is one). Observe the entire process using your five senses.

Now swallow and be mindful / aware of the what happens in your body when you swallow.

Continue eating in this way. Again, it's not about a precise process. It's more intent. It's about being awake and aware to the process of eating. You don't have to follow the steps and instructions above specifically, either. You just need to be conscious.

**These are the basics of mindful eating**

As you can tell from the instructions above, when we practice mindful eating we are really changing our intent about food. In a nutshell it is about being aware.

Here are some of the most important basics of mindful eating to follow:

**Just eat:** Do not binge eat and do not eat food while watching TV or doing anything else. When you're eating, just eat. Make that the one thing you are doing.

**Take time to appreciate food:** Don't wolf down your food. Take the time to notice and appreciate your food. This isn't so much about eating *slowly* as it is about eating *mindfully*.

**Eat when you're hungry, not starving:** If you are too hungry when you come to the dinner table, you will be tempted to scoff your food down too quickly. Eat when you get hungry, but before you get starving.

**Eat with your mind:** Too often, we go through the physical process of eating while the mind is somewhere else. Make sure your mind is actively engaged in the process of eating.

**Cook mindfully:** You can get more our of mindful eating by also cooking your own food in a mindful way. When cooking, take the time to notice the textures, scents, flavours and other senses involved with the food, and mindfully observe the transformation process from oven to plate.

**Remember this mindful eating mantra:** "I will be mindfully awake to all the food I eat."

**Note that you can also use mindfulness to quit drinking**


**Mindfulness Eating Exercise For Kids**

If you want to teach your kids mindfulness, one of the best places to start is with mindful eating.

Try this simple children's exercise.

Set a fun food plate full of bright colours, like various fruits, for instance. Now ask your kids the following questions:

**What do you see:** Get them to observe the food with their eyes

**What do you hear:** Does the food make any sound

**What do you smell?**

**What does it feel like?**

**What does it take like?** Let them take a small bite of the food and ask them to observe the tastes. Then after they swallow, get them to describe the tastes to you.

**Taking things further with a mindful eating course:** The mindful eating exercises and habits we have looked at above will help you to get started. But you might like to take things further. There are a lot of different mindful eating teachers around the world. One god place to find a mindful eating course or teacher is via The Center For Mindful Eating, which you can find here.

**Research on the Benefits of Mindful Eating**

Mindful eating has been studied numerous times by leading scientific institutes, and has been found to be beneficia

Let's take a look at some of the main benefits of mindful eating, and the research that backs it up.

**On Mindful Eating For weight loss**

One of the biggest benefits of mindful eating is weight loss [Harvard]. Yes, you can use mindful eating to lose weight, and it has been proven to be highly effective.

Mindful eating helps with weight loss because it slows down our eating patterns, makes us more aware of food, and essentially gives us more mental control over our eating habits.

This can be huge for binge eating [National Library of Medicine].

Mindfulness in general also helps us to control our emotions. For this reason, mindful eating helps stop comfort eating.

Mindfulness also helps with other eating disorders, and also has been shown to improve willpower [PsychologyToday], ultimately meaning it will help you stick to a diet.

**Mindful eating improves nutrition:** It can be very easy to slip into a habit of simply eating whatever. We're in a rush. We don't have time to prepare proper food. But we're hungry. So we just eat whatever fills us up. The problem is we are eating mindlessly. When you become more aware of food, through mindful eating, you will naturally be more inclined to choose your foods consciously, and this will lead to eating a more varied and more nutritious meal (this is not backed by science but is my personal experience).

**Mindful Eating And Diabetes**

Research [ScienceDaily] shows that mindful eating is as effective in managing Type 2 Diabetes as the more traditional nutrition-based diet approaching when it comes to managing blood sugar levels and weight.

**Mindful Eating And Digestion**

Research [HARVARD] shows a positive link between mindful eating and digestion.

Digestion involves complex hormonal signals between the nervous system and the digestive system. It takes approximately twenty minutes after eating for us to get that feeling of being full. If we eat too quickly, we often *overeat* before we get the message telling us to stop eating.  This can cause serious digestion problems.

Author and nutritionist Lilian Cheung, together with Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh, produced research that shows that mindful eating leads to slower eating, which lets the body tell us that we are full so we do not overeat.

So, by eating mindfully we give our bodies time to digest and we are less likely to overeat.

**VIDEO  / YOUTUBE**

In this video, Karen Mayo [author of the bestselling book Mindful Eating, available on AMAZON]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtOU4f3smt4

**Download This Mindful Eating Guide (Pdf)**

**CONCLUSION**

There are so many benefits of mindful eating, and it is very easy to start. There really is no reason not to do it (well, except simply being too busy).

If you're trying to lose weight, you're working on an eating disorder, or you simply want to appreciate food more, try mindful eating. It's free and it's a win-win.

Leave a comment and remember to subscribe.