

A Sensible Alternative to Dieting: Mindful Eating



By Joseph Wieliczko, Psy.D.

Mindful eating is new to the general public, yet it has been practiced for a very long time. Mindful eating is about bringing awareness to our eating habits. Rather than struggling with the restrictions of the diet mentality, mindful eating offers us the opportunity to enjoy food in a healthy way.

Many people struggle with their eating. They feel stuck in eating habits that are driven by stress, binge eating, emotions, mindless eating, etc. Our poor eating habits can also be triggered by boredom, the sight or smell of food, fear, anxiety, and a host of other forces. As much as we try to change our eating habits, we still struggle because of these factors.

The multitude of programs designed to help us with our eating issues often do not focus on how emotional eating, stress eating, cravings etc. contribute to our eating habits. Such poor eating habits can sabotage and undermine our efforts to make the dietary changes we want.

Mindful eating is about cultivating a nonjudgmental awareness. This increased

awareness creates the possibility of change, which we have wanted all along. So how do we eat mindfully? We start by gently and nonjudgmentally being aware of the five senses as we eat as well as the thoughts, emotions, and impulses we experience in the course of the day that relate to food. As we bring greater awareness to the eating experience (and the thoughts, emotions, and impulses throughout our day), we start to gain an understanding and insight into our eating habits. Such understanding allows for change without the need for willpower.

In my program called the Mindful Eating and Stress Management Educational Program, I teach a variety of techniques to cultivate awareness; to slow down the eating process, to create self-compassion, to learn the difference between false and genuine hunger cues, and to recognize the eight types of hunger, etc. Additionally, I teach mindfulness practices such as meditation. Such practices help lower stress, which can have a variety of potential benefits.

My program is an online 8-session group (\$30 per session, \$240 total) which meets once a week for one hour with a maximum of 12 participants. To register and learn more about mindful eating, go to www.Mindful4life.com. See the Event Calendar for information on a FREE online mindful eating presentation.

Mindful Eating & Stress Management Educational Program

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- Mindful Eating Online Training Programs
- Private Group Online Training Programs
- Complimentary Presentations to Business, Medical & Social Groups

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