



Mindful Eating

For our health and the health of the planet

In our busy lives, we often rush through 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 it be causing harm to our environment? A new approach suggests that mindful eating may help us improve our health and the health of the planet through the practice of enjoying food with understanding and compassion. To understand this new philosophy, consider each of the four key principals- what we eat, why we eat, how we eat and how much we eat.



What?

We know that the food we choose will impact our personal health, in both the short and long term. Choosing more healthful foods like fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds and whole grains also has the added benefit of being more sustainable.



Why?

Many factors influence why we eat. Nourishing our bodies and providing fuel for our daily activities should be the primary reason. Practicing mindfulness can help us filter out the other factors that may distract us.



How much?

Rushing to fill our plates without consideration of how much we really need can lead to both overeating and increased food waste. Being more mindful during mealtime can help us pay attention to our hunger cues and understand when we are satisfied.



How?

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.

REFERENCES:

An Expanded Model for Mindful Eating for Health Promotion and Sustainability: Issues and Challenges for Dietetics Practice.
Fung, Teresa T. et al. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Volume 116, Issue 7, 1081 - 1086.
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