

Session 15: Mindful Eating, Mindful Movement

Today's lesson will first focus on the concept of what is called "mindful eating". Then we will talk about "mindful movement".

Q Are there times when you realize that you are still eating and simply haven't noticed that you are not even hungry anymore?

Go from hungry to STUFFED! or eating while scrolling thru phone- and where did all the food go??

Do you ever get to the end of a long day and realize how little you have moved and how much time you spent sitting?

These patterns are common.

All of us can benefit from practicing being more "mindful" of our eating and movement habits throughout the day.

This has 2 benefits:

Being more **mindful** can **help us to reach or maintain our healthy lifestyle goals.** It may also **help our physical and mental well-being.**

1.
2.

Let's start with **mindful eating.**

Mindful eating means you are aware of not only what food is on the plate, but aware of the entire experience of eating as well. It tends to enhance the whole experience of eating.

WHAT does it mean?

1. Mindful eating means to eat slowly and with awareness.

- Tune into all your senses while you eat.
- Be aware of your level of hunger and fullness.

being totally focused on each sensation that happens while eating, chewing, tasting, swallowing, and savoring each bite.

Most people don't think about, or even enjoy, the taste of what they are eating; they are just focused on the next bite and/or what is happening in the environment. This is called "mindless eating". Some call this "distracted eating".

2. Mindful eating helps with weight management.

Q How long does it take for you to eat your meals?

- Your brain has time to register that you are full. This takes about 20 minutes. If you eat too quickly, you are more likely to overeat.

WHY Bother?

- When you notice and enjoy every mouthful, you will feel more satisfied at the end of the meal.

Benefits of mindful eating?

Research shows that when people eat slowly and mindfully, they tend to eat less food. Enjoying each bite leads to being more satisfied at the end of the meal, often with less food and fewer calories.

Other benefits of mindful eating:

- increases awareness of the amount of food being eaten
- helps with learning how to ignore the urges to snack that aren't associated to hunger
- can reduce binge eating
- enhances the whole experience of eating

What are the effects of mindless eating?

Answers:

•Decreased awareness of the amount of food eaten, •Less enjoyment of food, •Decreased ability to assess level of hunger or fullness, •Disruption of the mind-body connection so signals that regulate food intake may not be sensed, leading to overeating.

3. Prepare to eat slowly and mindfully.

A• **Create a calm eating environment.** This lets you pay attention to what you are eating. Put flowers, plants, or a candle on the table. Turn on calming music. Nice dishes/ presentation

B• **Decrease distractions.** Avoid (or limit) eating while doing other things at the same time. Turn off the TV, electronics, phones, and put away reading material. Can you describe times when you have eaten while distracted? watching TV? Driving?

C• **Sit down and relax.** Avoid (or limit) eating while standing in the kitchen or when on the run. B1 What happens to the amount of food being eaten?

D• **Appreciate the moment.** When you first sit down to eat, pause for a minute. Take a few deep breaths. Say grace, if that is your tradition. Or think about all of the hands that brought the food to your table.



B2. What happens to your enjoyment of food?

B3. When your distracted-how about your awareness of hunger/ fullness

4. Focus on your food. Eat slowly, with awareness. Try to make each meal last at least 20 minutes.

Here are some ways to make your meals last at least 20 minutes. Jot down which you want to incorporate

- Look at the food on your plate. Notice the colors, shapes, and aroma of the food.
- Take small bites. Be aware of how the food feels in your mouth, the texture. Take time to savor the taste of the food.
- Chew slowly and be aware of how much you are chewing. Try to chew at least 5 times more per mouthful than you usually do.
- Finish chewing and swallowing each bite before you put more food on your fork.
- Put your fork down for 10-15 seconds after a few bites. Pause to take a sip of water or take a deep breath. These small changes will really help you extend your mealtime.
- You may be distracted by others or your own thoughts. Pause, and return your focus to the food in front of you.

Use non dominant hand

Q What do you think of these strategies? Which of these do you want to use/do these next weeks.

With which meal?

5. Stay tuned to your level of hunger and fullness.

handout hunger scale

- Several times during the meal, check your level of hunger and fullness. Do you **need** more food? Do you **want** more food?
- Are you still eating just because there is food left on your plate?
- Are you ready to stop eating? If so, push away your plate and pay attention to any physical sensations.

6. Practice eating mindfully with others and alone.

- Take time to enjoy one another's company.
- You may want to try eating a meal in silence. Even short periods of silence can be very calming.

Enjoy each and every bite of your food.

Practice eating slowly and mindfully.

**This may help you feel physically and mentally satisfied
with a smaller amount of food.**

Q

Any questions about MINDFUL EATING? or thoughts you want to share?

What can you see yourself doing to improve your mindful eating experience?

Q

During which meal or snack will you begin to practice eating mindfully?

Mindful eating takes discipline and practice. Try to eat one meal or snack mindfully every day. Even eating the first few bites mindfully can help break the habit of wolfing it down without paying attention. Even very healthy eaters must remind themselves from, time to time, to eat slowly and mindfully.

The objective is to help to bring awareness to how much you are eating, how fast, and how your body feels during and after the meal. Everyone's minds wander easily. If this happens, just return to the awareness of that taste, chew, or swallow.

In previous sessions, we have suggested that you try to make your meal last 20 minutes. This will also help you with your mindful practice. The goal is for you to feel both physically and mentally satisfied at the end of the meal.



Now let's talk about how mindfulness can apply to movement as well. It can be a way to enhance your physical activity experience.

Mindful Movement

Life is busy. Many people tell us that they feel stressed and overwhelmed by all they need to accomplish at home, at work, for their family and community.

For some of you, this means long periods of sitting with little time spent stretching, moving, or doing much planned physical activity.

Practicing **mindful movement** can help you **break this pattern.**

1. Mindful movement means to be aware of your total movement throughout the day.

- Tune in to how much sitting you do.
- Add movement and activity when and where you can.

2. Mindful movement also means doing physical activity (such as a simple 15–20-minute walk) with purpose and increased awareness of the full experience. *how physical activity affects your body.*

- Tune into your posture and breathing as you prepare for walking (or any other exercise). Notice how your body feels.
- Pay attention to the rhythm of your breathing and how it changes as you move.
- Notice the movement of your feet. Feel how your feet make contact with the ground and then move through the air. Also notice the contact between your feet and your socks or shoes as you move.
- Do you notice any other physical sensations? Some people get distracted by changes in body heat or other minor discomforts. Try to counter these thoughts by reflecting on the opportunities that movement allows. Gently bring your attention back to the present moment.
- Appreciate the outdoors. Tune into the sights and sounds of nature.

While you are active, tune into all your senses. What do you see around you? What do you hear? Smell? Feel?

Try to experience and enjoy movement with every step. Focus on the process, not just reaching the goal of getting a certain number of minutes of activity.

3. Pay attention to how your body feels when moving after long periods of sitting.

- Be aware of how you feel when you make a shift from long periods of sitting to stretching, moving, and being active.

Before you exercise, think about how you are feeling. Choose an exercise that will best satisfy your present needs. And when you finish- congratulate yourself and notice how you feel afterwards.

4. Stop and consider all the amazing work your body does day in and day out. Think about adding movement to your routine that increases awareness of and appreciation for your physical well-being (such as simple stretches or gentle yoga).

- Use mindful movement to relax, release tension, and reduce stress.
- Use mindful awareness to notice how often you give yourself permission to be physically active or to take movement breaks during long bouts of sitting.

We are often critical of our bodies. Being mindful can help you appreciate your body and all it does! Keeps you balanced and upright! :)

Use mindfulness to identify any positive feelings you get from movement.

increased awareness of how activity affects your mood, thinking, energy level, and level of stress.

Q

- Have you noticed any positive thoughts and feelings with movement?
- Do you notice that you feel energized or less stressed while being active?
- Notice as you are exercising, is your mind clear or dull, busy or calm?

During your time in GLB, have you experienced a shift in your attitude about being active? In what way?

Moving mindfully means being alert to any and all opportunities for movement. This may include sitting less or making time for planned physical activity you enjoy.

- Use your step tracker to stay aware of how much you move during the day. What happens to your steps as you become more mindful about movement? average daily steps?
- Use the **Active Head Challenge** (Session 8) to help you find ways to add as many short bursts of "spontaneous activity" as you can. Do you feel better at the end of an **Active Head Day**?

Q

- How can you turn a spare minute into an "active minute"?

Q

- List ways you could put mindful movement into a typical day.

Some people exercise because they feel they have to, it's required by REBOOT, or they feel guilty if they don't. Mindful movement can help you learn to enjoy being active for its own sake. It can help you to become more aware of the feelings of health and well-being that come from an active lifestyle.

Mindful movement is not about becoming a perfect exerciser. You still will have days that you struggle with motivation to get up off the couch and take a walk. But practicing mindful movement will help you enjoy all the positive feelings and sensations you get from being active.



To Do:

Check the boxes when you complete each item:

☐ **Keep track of your weight.**

Weigh yourself once a week. Record your weight.

☐ Record what you eat and drink using your preferred method. Come as close as you can to your calorie and fat gram goals.

☐ Record your physical activity using your preferred method. Come as close as you can to your activity goals.

- Be physically active for at least 150 minutes per week. If you were active for more, great work and keep it up.
- If you were active for less, that's okay. Add 30 minutes more.

Practice Mindful Eating (use the hunger scale)

☐ Create a calm eating environment. See suggestions on page 1.

☐ Practice eating slowly and mindfully. Try to make each meal last about 20 minutes. See suggestions on page 2.

☐ When practicing mindful eating were you aware of any new thoughts or feelings? _____

☐ On a scale of 1-5 (1=none and 5=a lot) rate your experience of:

Physical fullness	1	2	3	4	5
Enjoyment of the food	1	2	3	4	5
Overall satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5

Practice Mindful Movement

☐ Be aware of how much time you spend sitting.

☐ Add movement and activity when and where you can.

☐ When practicing mindful movement were you aware of any new thoughts or feelings? _____

☐ Try some of the strategies listed on page 5. How did it go? _____