

Mindful Eating Challenge

What?

Nutrition is key to your health. This month, you will practice mindful eating using an eating journal as a tool to become aware of what, how much, and when you eat.

How?

Each day, use your mindful eating journal to keep an eye on the food you consume. The journal is a great tool to learn your eating habits, such as when you eat and why. Use this information to make the best eating decisions for you. The other part of the challenge is to eat purposefully. To eat purposefully, eat at the dinner table. Avoid eating while you do other activities, like watching TV or reading. Lastly, put any food you eat in a bowl or on a plate. This helps to avoid over-snacking when multiple servings are in front of you (i.e., chip bags, ice cream tubs).

Mindful eating journal

Connect your mind and body by using the eating journal. Try to eat when your hunger level is a 3 or 4, and stop around 6 or 7. Stay between the levels 3 and 7 to keep from overeating. Remember to learn your own eating habits.

Eating level guide:

1. **Weak** – Feeling faint and need food immediately
2. **Empty** – Everything looks good
3. **Pangs** – Stomach is growling
4. **Hungry** – Getting cravings and ready to eat
5. **Neutral** – Not hungry or full
6. **Comfortable** – Satisfied but could easily eat more
7. **Satisfied** – Hunger is gone and you won't be hungry for a few hours
8. **Full** – No desire for anything else to eat
9. **Uncomfortable** – Feeling stuffed and uncomfortable
10. **Oh my** – Painfully full and couldn't eat any more

Why?

According to a Harvard Medical School study, being distracted while you eat may lead to overeating. The study also claims that mindful eating can reduce calorie intake and increase satisfaction after a meal. Choosing to eat purposefully can help you naturally eat what your body needs.

Print out the following 4-week eating journal to mark the time, food item, and your hunger level before and after each day.

Monday – Week #1											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:00am	Eggs, turkey bacon			X before				X after			

Tuesday – Week #1											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Wednesday – Week #1											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Thursday – Week #1											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Friday – Week #1											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Saturday – Week #1											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Sunday – Week #1											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Monday – Week 2											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Tuesday – Week #2											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Wednesday – Week #2											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Thursday – Week #2											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Friday – Week #2											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Saturday – Week #2

Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Sunday – Week #2

Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Monday – Week #3

Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Tuesday – Week #3

Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Wednesday – Week #3

Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Thursday – Week #3

Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Friday – Week #3											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Saturday – Week #3											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Sunday – Week #3											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Monday – Week #4											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:00am	Eggs, turkey bacon			X before				X after			

Tuesday – Week #4											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Wednesday – Week #4											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Thursday – Week #4											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Friday – Week #4											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Saturday – Week #4											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Sunday – Week #4											
Time	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10