

FEED YOUR POTENTIAL



BLOG #2: MINDFUL EATING

Feeding your potential isn't just about what you eat but how you eat too.

With the busy lives we all lead, meals are often rushed affairs. We eat quickly, on the run, in the car, working at our desks and watching TV. We also eat even when we're not hungry or allow our emotional state to dictate the types of food (often unhealthy) that we reach for.

Because of this many of us have weight or digestive problems and lack awareness of the food and the amount we are eating.

Is this something that resonates with you and how you regularly eat? If so then eating more mindfully could be something for you to think about to help you feed your potential.

What is Mindful Eating?

Eating should be a natural, pleasurable way of nourishing our bodies and satisfying hunger. Mindful eating is an ancient practice in which attention is paid to how and where we eat food. It means learning to listen to your body and recognising signals, understanding the differences between emotional and physical hunger and choosing foods that will nourish you and satisfy your hunger.

Top tips for mindful eating

Take a seat

Preferably at a table. Give attention to your food and enjoy the experience.

Avoid distractions while you eat

Don't sit in front of the TV, your laptop or your phone. Ban electronics at the table so that you can simply enjoy the food and the company of others.

Eat slowly

Take time to chew, savour and enjoy your food. This technique helps with weight maintenance, as you will give your brain enough time to recognise signals that you are full and will prevent over-eating. It will also improve digestion, as the digestive process begins in the mouth and if the food is chewed well enough there is less strain on the rest of the digestive system.

Put the knife and fork down

Wait until you have swallowed one mouthful before reaching for another.

Recognise the differences between emotional and physical hunger

Emotional hunger needs to be satisfied immediately while physical hunger can wait. Emotional hunger is not satisfied by a full stomach and physical hunger stops when you are full. Thinking about your eating triggers can also help you realise if you are physically hungry or emotional eating. Are you bored, lonely, stressed, upset or angry? If your triggers are non-hunger related, find alternatives to food that can help meet your emotional needs at that time. If you are bored, Take 15 and do something you enjoy such as reading a book or completing a puzzle. If you are lonely, phone a friend. If you are stressed, upset or angry, practice a breathing or relaxation exercise or go for a walk outdoors.

Think about the story behind your food before it got on your plate

Eating in this way not only helps us to form positive relationships with food, it also helps us to make better food choices, enhancing our overall health and wellbeing.

Start with one “mindful” meal a day

If you find the thought of implementing the above tips overwhelming, commit to picking one meal a day to be more mindful of. Sit down, eat slowly, and really focus on enjoying your food.

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