

Food for Thought

What is mindful eating?

- Allowing yourself to become aware of the positive and nurturing opportunities that are available through food preparation and consumption by respecting your own inner wisdom.
- Choosing to eat food that is both pleasing to you and nourishing to your body by using all your senses to explore, savor, and taste.
- Learning to be aware of physical hunger and satiety cues to guide your decision to begin eating and to stop eating.
- Acknowledging responses to food (likes, neutral or dislikes) without judgment.



Free Handout for Individuals from The Center for Mindful Eating

A Curious Stance

By Molly Kellogg, RD, LCSW

Consider approaching your next meal or snack with a curious stance. I wonder what this bite will taste like? Am I hungry yet? What will hit the spot right now?

That has an interesting feel in my mouth – what does it remind me of? What spices were used in here? Does this bite taste the same or a little different from the last one? Let's see, what does my stomach feel like now? Can I sense the food in there?

Curiosity can be a useful way to focus attention, a place to return to. We can at any time return to being curious by asking questions and waiting for the answer in the moment.

Curiosity and fear typically don't coexist. When we are curious

about something, fear recedes.

When fear emerges, our curiosity usually becomes unavailable to us. They are like a seesaw. Since fear and anxiety are common barriers to mindfulness around food, curiosity is a tool to help us stay on track.



A curious stance assists us in staying in the present. We may find ourselves curious about something in the future, such as "I wonder if this food will make me sleepy this

afternoon." We can't know the answer until the afternoon comes, so this is an opportunity to come back to the present moment. Later, the question can be revisited in the present, "Do I feel sleepy now?"

It is easy to lose our curiosity quickly. Our busy mind takes over, and we are off and running with thoughts of our day.

Remaining curious or returning to a curious stance over and over while eating allows us to explore different levels of awareness. Curiosity always assumes there is more in the present to observe and gain from.

Which questions tend to work for you? The most basic questions are: "What am I aware of?" or "What is here for me right now about this experience with this food?" You may prefer more specific questions, such as those about taste, texture and fullness. Keep handy your favorite questions to encourage mindfulness.

Molly Kellogg, RD, LCSW, is the author of Counseling Tips for Nutrition Therapists: Practice Workbook, 2006 and a free e-mail series of Tips. She is a Board Member of TCME and welcomes comments.
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Internet Resources

- www.tcme.org
- www.mindfuleating.org
- www.mindfulpractices.com
- www.slowfoodusa.org
- www.mindlesseating.org