

## MINDFUL EATING

Have you ever sat in front of your TV, gorging on a chocolate bar, cake or bag of crisps whilst staring at the screen and before you know it, the chocolate, cake, crisps have gone? After you finished, are you left with a strong urge for some more?

Mindful eating can put a stop to this cycle.

Mindfully eating makes you aware of your eating habits, and helps you stay one step ahead of your hunger. You will eat when you are hungry and stop when you are full. There are many benefits of mindful eating:

- It increases your awareness of the amount of food you eat
- It helps you identify when you are physically hungry or emotionally hungry
- It can help you stop binge eating
- It will make your meals more enjoyable
- You will look for food that you enjoy rather than eat for the sake of it

Mindful eating will help you to eat slower and stop eating on autopilot. When you are mindfully eating, you're not thoughtlessly filling yourself with food. It is a new skill that you learn and like any new skill will need a bit of time to get good at. The key to eating mindfully is that you keep practicing it, like any new habit, until it becomes automatic.

There is lots of research evidence, that mindful eating will help you lose weight. One study, for example, tracked more than 1,400 mindful eaters and showed them to have lower body weights, a greater sense of well-being, and fewer symptoms of eating disorders.

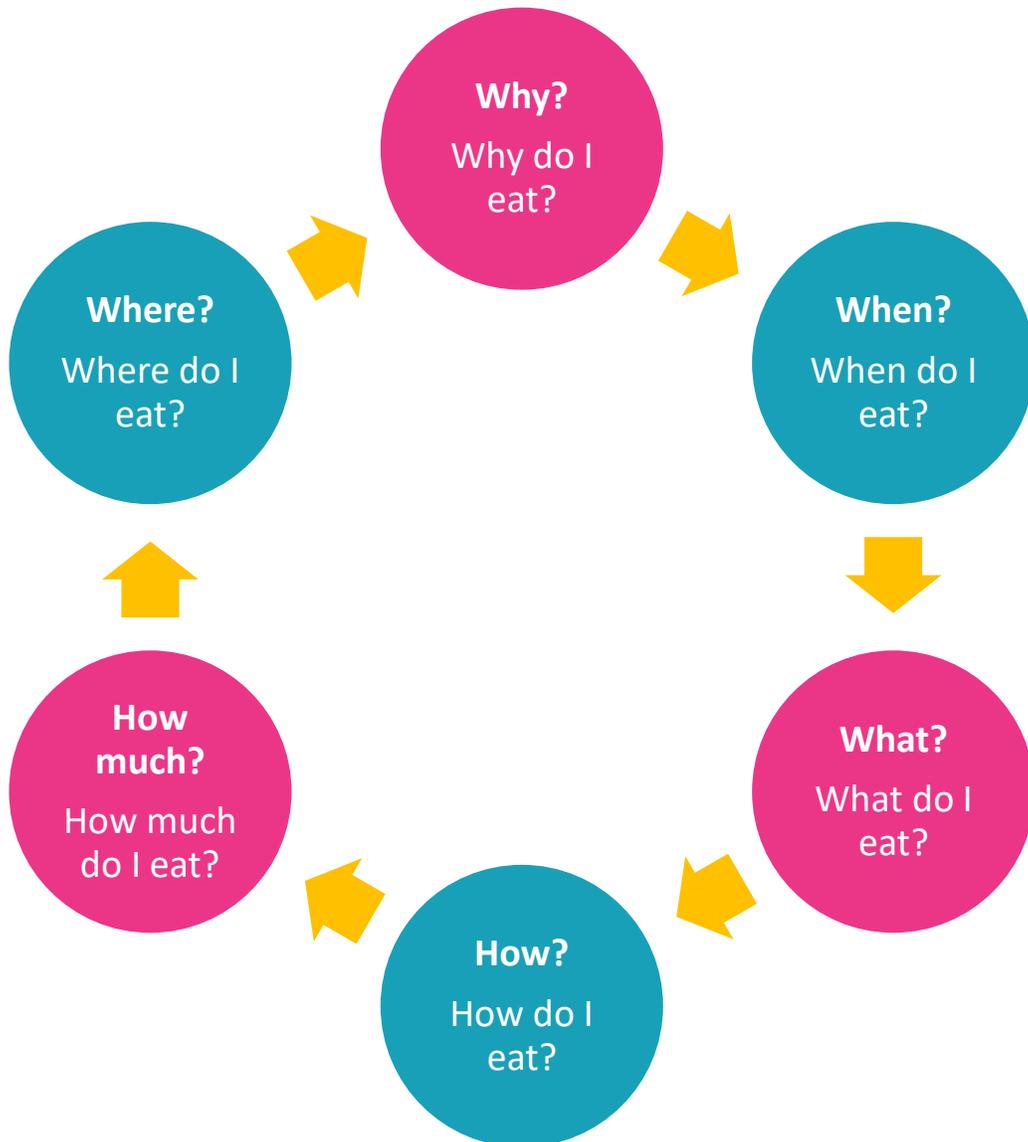
When you are eating mindfully your body is satisfied with less because it's getting more sensation and more satisfaction from the food that you are eating.

The reason for this is that it takes about 20 minutes for your bodies satiety signals to register. Eating slowly allows your body time to register when you are full and give you a chance to stop eating when you are physically full.

Another reason for feeling full with eating less food is psychological. When you eat slowly and mindfully you will feel satisfied and feel less deprived, because your senses are more tuned in to tastes, smells and textures.

Eating slowly will also help with your digestion and you will feel less bloated.

## EATING MINDFULLY WILL HELP YOU IDENTIFY:



## TIPS ON MINDFUL EATING

- 1) Eat your meals sitting down and without distraction. Avoid standing up and grabbing a quick bite or eating in the car.
- 2) Turn off the TV, put your phone away, sit somewhere where you can focus on the food in front of you.
- 3) When you sit down, pause for a moment and take a few breaths.
- 4) Look at the food on your plate and notice the shape, colour and smell of food.
- 5) Take small bites, chew slowly and be aware of how many times you are chewing.
- 6) Put your knife and fork down for a few seconds between bites.
- 7) Check in a few times if you are still hungry. Are you eating because you are still hungry or just because you want more food?
- 8) Leave a small amount of food on your plate. You don't have to finish everything that is on your plate.

On the following page you will find the “Mindful eating worksheet”.

This worksheet is really helpful in showing you how eating slowly and mindfully changes the way you taste and experience food.

Try it out and you will be amazed what you will discover about your likes/dislikes of food.

You can do this worksheet with your friends or family for a bit of fun.