
mindful eating
DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON AND BEYOND

There's nothing better than a warm bowl of homemade soup on a cool Fall day. We have an innate desire to eat hot, hearty meals during the cold winter months to achieve balance. Infusing mindfulness into your daily routine will help you stay balanced and avoid overeating this season and beyond.

H**ere we will discuss five ways to eat mindfully during the holidays and enjoy your holiday season without feeling bogged down and restricted.** Since so much of the holiday festivities revolve around large meals, practicing these mindfulness tips will equip you with the tools to help you succeed in staying on track with your health goals while still enjoying your pumpkin pie without the guilt. Enjoy!





ditch perfection

Have you noticed how hard it is to strive for perfection? It's easy to get derailed when you think you're only allowed to eat salad and a cup of hot cocoa is off-limits.

Perfection is the enemy of progress!

You've probably thought or even said before, "Don't worry; nobody's perfect." What a true statement. Have you ever thought of how this applies to your eating habits, too? Perfection doesn't exist, and you're in for a much more balanced life when you apply this to your food, as well.

If you have a slice of pumpkin pie, your health goals are not out the window. Balance that slice of pie with a healthy amount of veggies, and take a walk after dinner. It's all about balance, and life is much sweeter this way.



check in

During a season filled with an abundance of delicious foods, it can be hard to say no. We're conditioned to think we should eat as much as possible during these holiday meals since they only come around once a year. Do you ever feel that way?

One way to not over-indulge is to be mindful of your choices. **Before you fill your plate, ask yourself if you genuinely want what you're putting on your plate or if you only think you do.** Perhaps it's just routine to head for dessert after your meal – but do you truly want it, or are you satisfied with what you've already had? Will you regret your choice later?

Learning not to act on impulse and be mindful of your decisions is a great tool to use year-round, not just during the holidays.



unwind

The holidays are known to be jam-packed, busy, and at times, very stressful. With some preparation, you can keep one leg up on the stress headed your way. Preparing mentally for this will keep you in control and well-balanced. **What are your most favorite ways to unwind? What relaxes you, helps you forget your troubles, and rejuvenates you?**

Be sure to be mindful of using your relaxation techniques to take care of yourself this season (and beyond!) – stress is a contributing factor to mindless eating and reaching for those comfort foods. If you keep your stress as under control as possible, you will be much less likely to turn to food for comfort.



know your triggers

If you stop and think about when and where you find yourself mindlessly eating beyond when you are hungry, what comes up? If you can pinpoint what these triggers are, you can find the answers to put a stop to them. Do you reach for the ice-cream when you're stressed out or upset? If something is within arms reach, will you mindlessly munch on it even if you don't necessarily even want it?

Think about these triggers and brainstorm some ways to avoid them. What can you do to turn these around? If you are tempted to eat the whole bowl of popcorn if it's in front of you, portion some out in a small bowl and enjoy that slowly. **What will you choose to do when you're stressed out instead of reaching for the cookie dough?**



snacking

Do you find yourself overeating when you've waited too long to eat between meals? By the time you sit down for dinner, you're so hungry you could eat everything in sight. Does that sound familiar? I know I've been there -- many times!

To avoid this trigger for overeating, be sure not to go too long without eating. Snack on some raw almonds or carrot sticks with hummus to keep your hunger at bay. **Carry a healthy snack, such as a bag of raw nuts, in your bag and your car, so you are never empty-handed when you're feeling hunger approach.**

Another helpful tip I use is to have a healthy snack before holiday meals. Doing so helps avoid overeating during those big, hearty holiday feasts.



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