

# Mindful and Instinctive Eating at Work

By:

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NUTRITION

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Mindful and Instinctive Eating are two practices that come together to increase productivity, reduce healthcare costs, support weight management, increase employee engagement, and promote the ability of every individual to be their healthiest and most energetic self at work.

## Mindful Eating

means to allow ourselves to become more aware of the positive and nurturing opportunities that are available through food preparation and consumption by respecting own inner wisdom. By utilizing all five senses in choosing to eat food that is both satisfying and nourishing to our bodies, we are able to acknowledge our responses to food without judgment and become aware of our physical hunger and satiety cues.

## Instinctive Eating

is reestablishing our natural inclinations and gut feelings of choosing and consuming the foods that will nourish us most in the moment. Nourishment can be physical, emotional, and psychological. Instinctive Eating is a non-judgmental approach and is flourished through Mindful practices.

### Mindless Eating while Working

- Responding to emails
- Back to back calls
- Devouring lunch quickly



### Mindful Eating while Working

- Emails put on hold
- Podcasting and taking notes
- Savoring every bite



We may often forget to eat or may not feel hungry while working. Work duties become our focus and our hunger may not. Many times, we can overwhelm and stress ourselves to the point where eating no longer becomes a priority and simply becomes another task that needs to get done on our task list.

Mindful and Instinctive Eating practices at work can guide us to recognize when nourishment is needed, allow us to eat adequately, and support us in optimizing our health and increasing productivity, by giving us time to refocus and fuel our bodies.

Now I will show you how to integrate Mindful and Instinctive Eating practices at work, so that you too, can optimize your health!

Set a goal of incorporating the next 3 steps at least one time per week to help you become a more Mindful and Instinctive Eater at work. Grab a co-worker or colleague to do them with you too!

As you incorporate these steps, the easier it will be to make it a part of your work routine and make your nourishment a priority once again.



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## Step 1: Connect with your Hunger Cues

If you tend to focus on work and do not realize when you are hungry - until you are *really* hungry - set a timer for every 90-120 minutes to check in with yourself and notice if you are in need of a meal or snack.

On a scale from 1-10, with 1 being the Hungriest and 10 being the Fullest, think about how hungry you are. If you're at a 3 or 4, then it is time to eat. If you are neither hungry nor full, then you're a 5 and nourishment may not be needed.

### Take Action

Next, think about if you are in need of a snack or a full meal. What is going to satisfy your hunger right now? Then think about how much you want to enjoy or experience contentment with the food you are about to eat. What would support your food experience? Maybe it's eating with a co-worker or taking a few moments outside. Write your thoughts below:



## Step 2: Step Away from Your Work Space & Schedule Time to Eat

As opposed to sitting at your desk or at your work space, find a place to sit with a co-worker at the Employee Lounge, a table outside, or a nearby eatery. Sitting at a table while eating allows you to disconnect from work tasks and focus on your nourishment and your hunger and fullness cues. It also aids in digestion and promotes nutrient absorption to receive maximum benefit from the food you eat. Eating mindfully also allows you to refuel and refocus on the work tasks ahead, thus helping you to boost your productivity. Set aside at least 20 minutes for meal time whenever possible.

### Take Action

How did this experience make you feel? Was it stressful or pleasurable to be away from your work tasks? Were you able to better gauge your hunger and fullness cues? Write down and describe your experience:



## Step 3: Use All 5 Senses & Keep Distractions Away


Utilizing all 5 senses can help bring focus and pleasure to any meal while at work. Your meal or snack should be:

- Colorful and visually appealing to you; Smell delightful and make you want to eat it; and Eaten slowly so that you can experience the different textures and flavors in your foods.

You should also be fully present as often as possible - free from distractions. Challenge yourself or with a co-worker to a No Phone Challenge so that you can focus on your meal, create pleasurable conversation, and get the most out of your time to eat.

### Take Action

Did any distractions hold you back from engaging with all 5 senses or putting your phone down? If so, what were they? Think about how you can engage every sensory magnet to help you stay fully present during your work meal or snack time.



# Make lunch and snack breaks at work a priority once again and optimize your health and productivity.

## Eating while Working

No Food Contentment experienced

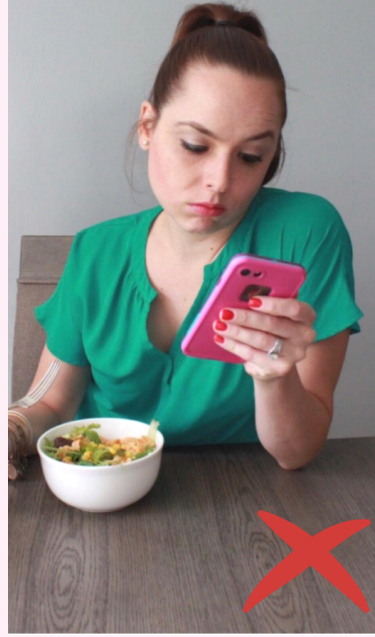


## Eating at a Table

Able to experience Food Contentment



## Distracted on the Phone



## Phone set Aside



## When Hunger Strikes at Work

I'm so Hungry but I need to get this done



I'm Hungry so I am putting work on hold to eat



## Mindless Eating with Co Workers



## Mindful Eating with Co Workers



Take the 3-steps toward Mindful & Instinctive Eating at work and optimize your health one step at a time, one day at a time, and one meal at a time.



Are you interested in learning more about Workplace Mindful and Instinctive Eating?

If so, connect with me to learn more about my Nutrition Workshops and Corporate Wellness Programs.

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