**ARTICLE #1**

[[](http://eatq.com/6-ways-to-become-a-mindful-eater/)](http://eatq.com/6-ways-to-become-a-mindful-eater/" \o "6 Ways to Become a Mindful Eater )

[**6 Ways to Become a Mindful Eater**](http://eatq.com/6-ways-to-become-a-mindful-eater/)

[By Dr. Susan Albers](http://eatq.com/author/salbers/), psychologist and author of Eating Mindfully & EatQ

Do you want to ditch dieting for good but aren’t sure what to do instead? Mindful eating may be the answer for you. Consider that 95% of dieters gain back the weight they’ve lost within five years. In contrast, clinical studies have shown mindful eating to help people eat 300 less calories a day, reduce their body mass index, feel better about their bodies, prevent weight gain and have a better relationship with food. The good news is that mindful eating is not hard. Read this list to discover some of the most important things a mindful eater does on a daily basis.

**1) Mindful eaters don’t eat until they are “full.”** Full is an overused and misleading term. Mindful eaters tend to eat until they are no longer hungry or feel satisfied. There is a big difference. By the time you perceive yourself to be “full,” it is often too late, you’ve overeaten. If you’ve dieted for years, your hunger and fullness signals may be crossed. Mindful eating can help rewire your brain to know what genuine physical hunger feels like.

**2) Mindful eaters pace themselves.** This is not easy. We live in a world that stresses instant access and hurrying; eating is no exception. Mindful eaters tell themselves to “slow down” or try to check in with their pace. Intentionally shifting into a reasonable pace is often easier said than done. How to slow down while you eat is going to be a hot topic at the Mindful Eating Summit where 20+ mindful eating experts will share their knowledge for free this summer. [Find out more by clicking here](http://mindfuleatingsummit.com/?utm_source=EatQ&utm_medium=Native&utm_term=6-ways-to-become-a-mindful-eater&utm_content=Context&utm_campaign=6WaysNative).

**3) Mindful eaters are “Choosy.”** While mindful eaters may seem like picky eaters, they are often just very discerning about the choices. Mindful eaters really taste food and if they don’t like it, they don’t eat it, just like picky eaters. Also, they aren’t afraid to tailor food to their particular taste. At restaurants, a mindful eater may ask the wait staff to make a few tweaks to their order like holding the bacon or asking for Swiss cheese rather than Cheddar.

**4) Mindful eaters are forgiving and flexible.** Yes, mindful eaters overeat on occasion! What they don’t do is obsess and beat themselves up as much as dieters. Mindful eaters know that tomorrow is another day and can “let it go.“ Often the strategy is to adjust the amount you eat at the next meal or snack.

**5) Mindful eaters tend to gauge their hunger first before taking a bite.** Being in the moment and fully present is key to mindful eating. Take a brief moment to ask yourself before taking a bite, “Am I really, really hungry? What I am feeling right now is…” This can help prevent you from walking into emotional eating.

**6) Mindful eaters break out of old habits.** When you know what habits keep you stuck like multitasking when you eat or nibbling while anxious, you can devote more energy and attention to these particular areas. Sometimes it is changing how you eat more than what you eat.

Is it worth it to adopt these habits? Yes! Hundreds of thousands of people have done it and so can you. To learn more about how a mindful eater thinks and feels, take the [Emotional Eating IQ Test](http://eatq.com/eat-q-score-survey?utm_source=EatQ&utm_medium=Native&utm_term=6-ways-to-become-a-mindful-eater&utm_content=Context&utm_campaign=6WaysQuiz)

**Dr. Susan Albers** is a psychologist at the Cleveland Clinic and the author of six books on mindful eating including Eat.Q: Unlock the Weight Loss Power of Emotional Intelligence. She has been quoted in the New York Times, Self, O Magazine, Shape, Fitness, and on the Dr. Oz show. [www.eatq.com](http://eatq.com/)

**ARTICLE #2**

**HOW TO DITCH DIETING & TAKE THE MINDFUL EATING PLEDGE**

If you are one of the millions of people contemplating starting a new [diet](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/diet), you are invited to try something radically different this fall. Instead, take the Mindful Eating Pledge which outlines five straightforward behavior changes that can help you easily shift out of overeating and onto a healthier new foot.

Put simply, mindful eating is about eating with more *awareness.* This method of eating aims to stop mindless eating behaviors like unconsciously popping food into your mouth while watching T.V. or eating out of a carton of ice cream to ease [stress](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/stress). Studies show that reducing these behaviors can have a significant impact on improving your health and weight.

The Mindful Eating pledge is good news for people who feel frustrated or hopeless with fad diets. Outcome [goals](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/motivation) (I want to lose five pounds) lead to frustration and are quickly abandoned because they are long term and you can’t control whether they happen. Process goals (eat without distraction) is something you can take charge of and have immediate benefits in the moment such as enjoying food more and reducing the risk of overeating.

Here is a list of the five things you agree to do:



I Pledge To:

* Eat Mindfully—be more aware of each bite I take
* Pace Not Race—eat slowly and with intention Pace Not Race—eat slowly and with intention
* When I Eat, Just Eat—eat without distraction
* Calm Without Calories—find true comfort and soothing without food
* Eat Less, Nourish More—eat foods that nurture my body

Changing the way you eat isn’t easy. But doing it with intention and a smart strategy can make it simpler and within reach. So put away the diet books and calorie counting. Sign up to take the Pledge, and you will get free Mindful Eating Tools sent right to your inbox throughout the year on [www.eatq.com](http://www.eatq.com).  You can download the pledge and hang it up! Feel free to pass it on.

ALSO, sign up for the **MINDFUL EATING SUMMIT.** Dr. Susan Albers, psychologist at the Cleveland Clinic and author of Eating Mindfully, is hosting the **1st Annual Mindful Eating Summit**. This highly unique event will showcase the voices of 20+ top professionals (researchers, clinicians, dietitians, therapists, writers).  This will include the world’s thought-leaders in Mindful Eating Psychology.  The goal is to deliver practical, inspirational, cutting-edge, clinical techniques, and innovative approaches to many of our unique eating challenges– body image, nourishing ourselves, overeating, binge eating, disordered eating, fad dieting, nutrition-linked health conditions, and much more.  **The goal: to educate and inform the public and professionals about mindful eating in a free and easily accessible format. SIGN UP HERE:** [**www.mindfuleatingsummit.com**](http://www.mindfuleatingsummit.com)

**ARTICLE #3 [“Mindful Eating Changed My Life!” (& I Lost 27lbs!)](http://eatq.com/lost-27lbs-eating-mindfully/" \o "Permalink to \“Mindful Eating Changed My Life!\” (& I Lost 27lbs!))**



Every single day I receive amazing emails from people all over the world who are eager to share their story. They explain the many ways mindful eating has changed their life. Let me introduce you to Heather! She is one of the many people who sing the praises of mindful eating. Here is what Heather had to say about the benefits:

**1. Dr. Albers:** How as mindful eating been helpful to you/changed your life?

**Heather:** Being mindful to me is a life-long process/practice. Being in-the-moment and having a fun relationship with food. Food is not the enemy, the enemy is between our ears! I went to my nutritionist today and I am down 27 pounds. I know I shouldn’t be focused on the numbers but I want to give a shout out to being a practicing mindful eater.

**2. Dr. Albers:** Were there difficult aspects that you had to overcoming when learning to eat more mindfully?

**Heather:** Working around gym folks for part of my day you can say that the diet word comes up almost everyday. Many people have an, “Eat this, don’t eat that approach.” Being mindful allows one to choose what goes in your mouth whether you desire an apple or a bag of chips. That boggled my mind that if I want chocolate lava cake I can have it within the mindful eating guidelines. Which include am I hungry? Is this what I really want? Am I eating this because of emotional reasons etc.

**3) Dr. Albers:** Who has been helpful/supportive in this new way of eating (ex. friends family etc.)?

**Heather:** I went to a nutritionist/dietitian who specializes in eating disorders. Her name is Courtney Sansonetti. During my first visit with her, I was waiting for her to place the new and improved diet plan in front of me. Her first words out of her mouth was “I am not putting you on a diet because they don’t work.” She then introduced me to this mindful eating mentality. I was looking at her credentials on her wall because she just said, “No diets!!!!” What!!!!! My second thought was, “She crazy, one of those holistic nuts.” Right after thinking that she said and I quote, “I know it sounds out there, but it’s very practical.” “Great,” I said to myself, she reads minds too. I’m sure my facial expression didn’t help. After listening to her she asked me to go to the book store and to look up Mindful eating and so this is how I stumbled onto Susan Albers books. Haven’t been able to put down her books since then.

**4. Dr. Albers:** What are your favorite mindful eating tips?  
 **Heather:** There are so many helpful tips to choose from. I would have to say really being in-the-moment when eating. Giving eating my undivided attention, no distractions! Also, breathing and knowing that when I exhale my food will still be there!

**5. Dr. Albers:** How long have you been trying to eat more mindfully?

**Heather:** I think I’ve been doing mindful eating for three month now. It is a journey because as my nutritionist told me I will have to readjust from time to time. Nobody changes like a light switch. She also, said that each meal is another opportunity to be mindful and all other ways of thinking are a waste of time.

Way to go Heather! Thank you for sharing your inspiring journey toward mindful eating!

**ARTICLE #4**

**Quickread**

**The Surprising Benefits of Mindful Eating**

Mindful eating is no longer a secret! If you checked out the *New York Times* article entitled "Mindful Eating as Food for Thought," it's likely that it left you "hungry" for more information on how to adopt this healthy, healing way of eating. Mindful eating uses the ancient art of mindfulness, or being present, to help cope with modern eating problems. It's not a diet. There are no menus or food restrictions. It is developing a new mindset around food.

The good news is that mindful eating can help binge eaters as well as many other eating issues. During the past 20 years, studies have found that mindful eating can help you to 1) reduce overeating and binge eating[1], 2) lose weight and reduce your body mass index (BMI)[2], 3) cope with chronic eating problems such as anorexia and bulimia, and reduce anxious thoughts about food and your body[3] and 4) improve the symptoms of Type 2 diabetes.[4] Thus, it has many benefits!

Intuitively, it makes sense that mindful eating is helpful to overeaters. It slows you down, makes you more aware of portion sizes and helps you get out of negative, automatic food habits like overeating while watching your favorite TV show. So how does it also help people who have other problematic eating habits?

In a nutshell, whether you are overeating or being overly restrictive when you diet, it's likely that you have lost track of your hunger and fullness. This break between your body and mind needs to be healed. Mindful eating can generally help in three ways:

1) Mindful eating plugs you back into your body's cues so you know when to stop and start eating. This can be such a difficult task if your sense of hunger and fullness has been skewed or warped by large restaurant portions, fad diets or comfort eating.

2) Being mindful can bring about better management of your emotions. Sometimes people restrict or overeat as a way to cope with negative feelings. Eating and not eating can distract you from your worries. When you have healthier ways of coping, such as mindful breathing and letting go of anxiety, you may no longer manage your emotions through your food choices. You can tolerate your emotions, as uncomfortable as they may be, without pushing them away or stuffing them down with food.

3) Mindfulness changes the way you think. Rather than reacting to food-related thoughts that urge you to overeat, overly restrict your diet or emotionally eat, etc., you respond to them. You can hear these thoughts without obeying them.

So if you aren't binge eating, don't worry. Mindful eating can be helpful to almost everyone.

**2 Ways to Get Started**

**1) Just Be Mindful.** Being more attentive and aware in all aspects of your life can help you to improve your eating habits. This is good news if you aren't ready to change what you put on your plate. Start by being more mentally present with your significant other, put away your cell phone and be more engaged with what you are doing and do one thing at a time instead of multitasking. When you are ready to change your meal habits, you will have more practice on how to be attentive and present. It's easy to eat an entire plate of food and not taste one bite.

**2) The Four Mindful Points:** Check in with each dimension of mindfulness. When you eat, ask yourself these questions:

1. Mind: Am I tasting each bite or am I zoned out when I eat?

2. Body: How does my body feel before and after I eat? Low energy? Stomach rumbling? Full? Empty?

3. Feeling: What do I feel about this food? Guilty? Pleasure? Joy? Disappointment? Regret?

4.Thoughts: What thoughts does this food bring to mind? Memories? Beliefs? Myths? Fears?

Thank you for the fantastic article on mindful eating! We need to continue to spread the word that diets don't work. Instead, mindful eating may be one key to turning around *all* of our unhealthy eating patterns. Eat, drink and be mindful!

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