

## **Mindful Eating**

By Sonja Lingo & Christy Bahan (2016)

**Mindful Eating** refers to the act of paying attention to the experience of eating so that you can **enjoy it more while eating less**. When discussing this topic, Sonja goes over the following acronym: **PAUSE**. PAUSE is an acronym by Susan Albers, Psy.D.

**P: Practice.** It will take practice to “break out” from automatic (mindless) eating.

Slow Down. You should take 20 minutes to eat; remember, it takes 20 minutes to feel full!

Tips to slow down include: putting your utensil down after each bite; using your non-dominant hand to eat; chewing your food 30-50 times before swallowing.

**A: Awareness.** Are you truly physically hungry? Get back in touch with your physical hunger cues. Rate your hunger on a scale from 1-10 *before* you eat. The scale ranges from ravenous to overstuffed. The key is not to wait to eat until you are starving & to stop eating once you are satisfied, but not quite full.

**U: Understand.** Identify how you are feeling. Are you having cravings? This would be Emotional or Psychological hunger. If so, “Feed the Need” appropriately. Refer to the list you made from the topic “Managing Cues”. Some examples would be: go for a walk, phone a friend.

**S: Savor.** Savor with all 5 senses. Pay attention to the shape & colors. Notice the aroma. Notice the flavor. What sound does it make when you chew it? How does the texture change as you chew it? Does it have an aftertaste? To do this, you must **Be Present**; do not multi-task. When eating, just eat!

**E: Enjoy.** Ask yourself: Are you really enjoying this food item?

If you are, **how little of this food item can you eat & be satisfied?**

If you are not, **stop eating it!** Do not eat something just because it is there or out of guilt from someone else. One question often asked is: “*How do I deal with food pushers?*” A simple: “Thanks, I’m not hungry” or “Thanks, I am full right now” should suffice – even if you have to repeat yourself several times until they get the message.

Last, but not least, **be thankful** for the food!

For more information, see: *eatingmindfully.com* or <http://eatingmindfully.com/mindful-eating/>

An **Activity** Sonja does with the group is based on the “**5 Chips Encounter**”. She usually uses nuts in place of chips for the FWSW participants. You can do this using chips if you prefer savory snacks; or if you prefer sweet snacks, you can adjust it to the “**5 BITE Encounter**” using ONE Andes mint.

For instructions on how to do this, click on the following link:

<http://www.mindfuleating.org/Awakening.html>

For a more general explanation, click on the following link:

<http://www.mindfuleating.org/TastingDeeply.html>

**Try it!**

It may take some time, but you should find that you are satisfied despite eating less!