



Eating Mindfully

Eating mindfully is a great way to practice a moment-to-moment mindset in an activity that you do everyday: eat. Eating mindfully is an intentional activity meant to help you slow down, become aware of what you are eating, and connect with your body's hunger signals and desires. The goal of eating mindfully is to know the ins and outs of your hunger. You can do this by becoming well acquainted with every aspect of your body and mind's intricate reactions to food and to the process of eating.

Try this 3-4 minute guided chocolate eating activity (one can read this independently and or have someone else read each step out loud):

- Consider the wrapped chocolate.
- Does the wrapper make a sound? What color is it? Where did it come from?
- Open the chocolate, slowly
- Do you feel a sense of anticipation, or an urge to immediately put the chocolate in your mouth? What physical sensations do you have?
- What emotions are you feeling? Just note them.
- Look at the chocolate
- Consider its texture, color, weight... Smell the chocolate - does the smell trigger any other senses? Where do you feel your sense of smell?

- Place the chocolate in your mouth but DO NOT EAT the chocolate.
- How does it feel as it melts? Where in your mouth can you taste it? What is the consistency? What is happening with your mouth, teeth, tongue, lips as it melts?
- Move the chocolate around your mouth
- Does the area of taste change? Does the taste itself change? What is happening to the chocolate?
- How do you feel?
- Swallow the chocolate, focusing on the sensation.
- Is there a lingering taste?
- How do you feel physically and emotionally?
- Take a little while to consider the experience

Questions to consider after you practice this activity:

1. How was this different from your general chocolate-eating experiences? More intense? Frustrating? More pleasurable?
2. Were you more aware of your emotions during the exercise?
3. Would this change your future experience of eating chocolate? Why?
4. How can this practice be translated to other foods and meal I consume?

This activity will be slow and methodical. Eating mindfully does not always have to be this way, but taking the time to slow down and practice mindful eating can be helpful.

Activity resource: <http://www.meditationinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Mindfulness-and-the-Art-of-Chocolate-Eating.pdf>

Albers, S. (2012). *Eating mindfully: How to end mindless eating & enjoy a balanced relationship with food*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publication