



RANDI STONE BROMLEY
CERTIFIED HEALTH COACH AND NUTRITIONIST
(480) 241-2848
WWW.LIVEBALANCEDTODAY.NET

Mindfulness and Diet

What does being mindful mean?

Mindfulness is state of being conscious or aware of something. It also means to focus your attention on the present moment, while acknowledging and accepting the current circumstance, feelings, thoughts.

How can being mindful help you in your weight loss journey?

Without being mindful about the food choices you make, you will never change the way you currently eat. Most people eat out of habit and eat what makes them feel good. When you make a conscience decision to change your diet for the better, you are consciously choosing which foods to you put into your body and **why**.

Signs of mindless eating-

- eating while distracted
- not really tasting your food
- not thinking about where your food has come from or what may be in your food
- eating meal quickly so you can get to the next task in your day
- eating out of boredom, sadness, anxiety

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So why should we care?

- Mindless eating can lead to weight gain. It takes 20 minutes for your brain to register that you are full, therefore if you eat fast, it is very easy to overeat calories.
- If you are not aware of the ingredients are in the food you are choosing, you will not know if they are contributing to weight gain, and/or other health issues.
- If you are not choosing the foods that will best fuel your body for what you are doing, you may not feel your best.

Beginning Mindfulness

- Try to time your meals to last 20 minutes or so.
- Really enjoy and appreciate your food! Look at it, smell it, and chew several times before swallowing.
- Put your utensil down between bites.
- Eat without distraction when alone. Just be with your food.
- When deciding whether you are hungry, ask your self-
 - a. When is the last time I ate? If it has been 3-4 hours than you are most likely hungry
 - b. Am I feeling an emotion I don't want to deal with right now?
 - c. Am I bored?
 - d. Am I thirsty? It's always a good idea to drink some water first!
 - e. Learn how to read labels so that you know what you are putting into your body
 - f. Be mindful about the animal products you are eating, how they may have been raised and the added hormones that they may have been given

The bottom line- losing weight and improving your diet is not just about calories, eating a certain type of diet, eliminating food groups, or having "willpower."
It is about being aware of why you are eating **and** what you are eating.