



# Mindful Eating

## An Introduction for Getting Started

### What is Mindful Eating?

In short, it is bringing mindfulness to the process of eating. So, let's define mindfulness:

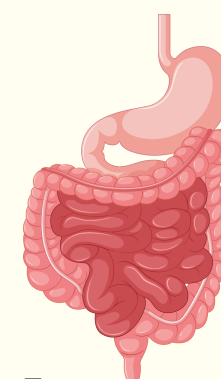
The process of being profoundly connected to the **present moment**, in relation to **mind, body and surroundings**, with **curiosity and courage**.

So Mindful Eating, in simple terms, involves tapping into this process when we are eating.

### Why Mindful Eating?



**Greater ease and peace**



**Improved digestion**



**Healthier relationship with food**



**Increased joy when eating**



**Deeper connection to self**

### Let's Be Clear

*Just like mindfulness as a practice, there is **no right or wrong way** to eat mindfully as long as you have the **intention of being mindful**. From there, your practice will grow as you do.*



### Invitation to Practice

You may like to begin with a flavourful item of food such as **dark chocolate, raisin or a strawberry**. You can take a moment initially to set yourself up **comfortably with minimal distractions** and setting a timer for **how long** you'd like to practice for (e.g. 5-10 minutes).

1.

To begin, there is an invitation to just take **1-5 deep breaths in the belly** (allowing your abdomen to expand as you breath in and relax as you breath out).

2.

Then you can rest your food item on a surface in front of you, and **simply observe it**. Imagining as best as possible that you were looking at this item for the first time in your life.

*What sensations/lack of sensations do you notice in your body? How does it appear (texture, size, shape etc.)? Can you smell anything? Do you imagine how it would taste or feel in your mouth?*



3.

When you're ready, you may like to **hold the item in your hand and repeat the observation** process in step 2. Not yet bringing it to your mouth, perhaps bringing it closer to your nose.

4.

Then you may like to **bring the item to your mouth**, bringing awareness to how it feels against your lips. After a moment, **you may like to lick it, or bite a piece of it off.**

*What sensations/lack of sensations do you notice in your body as you do this? How about your mouth and abdomen? And your senses (sight, smell, sound, touch, taste)?*

5.

**With your first bite, you can allow the item to sit in your mouth** a moment before chewing or swallowing. **As you begin to chew, chewing slowly** and continuing to notice what you notice.

*Again, bringing curiosity to the experience. what sensations are you aware of in your body? What feelings or thoughts are arising? Can you feel the food moving down your oesophagus inside your body? Does the flavour change at any moment? Has your sense of hunger/fullness changed?*

6.

**Repeat step 5 and any previous steps** you wish until you have finished or the time is up. You may like to **take a moment to thank yourself** for allowing this time to practice and notice again any thoughts, feelings and sensations that are present right now.



## Integration with Daily Life

The above is a formal practice that helps develop the skill of mindful eating and explore on a deeper level. Below are some tips for incorporating mindfulness into your meals in daily life.

**Timing** - Choose a frequency (e.g. 1 meal a day, or 1 day a week) to practice mindful eating. You can set a time for how long, for example, the first 5-10 minutes of your meal.

**Shared Meals** - Share meals with others for more connection with the present moment. Try inviting others to practice mindful eating with you, and maybe share your experiences afterwards.

**The 5 Senses** - Whenever you eat something, you can invite yourself to notice the 5 senses (i.e. sight, smell, sound, touch, taste), even if only for the 30 seconds while eating or drinking.

**Slow Down** - Try to take a break when you eat, breathe, relax your body and eat slowly. This opens space and time for you to naturally be more present with food and connect to your senses, thoughts and feelings and therefore eat in a more mindful way.



# Hello,

## I'm Rebecca Hastings, RD

(She/Her)

I'm a registered **Dietitian & Mindfulness Teacher** specialising in gut health and relationship to food.

I work with a range of cognitive (mind) and somatic (body) based tools to help people re-connect with themselves, uncover what keeps them 'stuck' in the same cycles and move forward with **greater ease, peace and joy!**

### My Background:

Registered Dietitian | Intuitive Eating Counsellor

Mindfulness Teacher | Body Image Coach

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- Body Image Coaching
- Mindfulness (MBSR)
- Embodied Self-Discovery
- Gut Health / IBS

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