Eat Slowly and Mindfully!

Mindfulness is being present and paying attention in the moment to the one thing, which you are doing now. It is the opposite of multitasking because you use all of your senses and pay full attention to one process. Slow eaters consume fewer calories than fast eaters. It takes time for your brain to receive the message of fullness (approximately 20 minutes).

When you eat mindfully, you sit down and really see the colors and textures of your food. You notice the aroma. When you put a bite into your mouth you notice the feel and flavors. You chew (28 times) and enjoy each bite. You think about where the food came from and appreciate what it took to bring it to your table.

Eating mindfully means that you are not reading, watching TV or driving while you eat. When you eat slowly and mindfully, you appreciate and fully taste your food. You are aware of when you are full and do not over eat. Mindless eating leads to increased calories. Practice mindful eating.

Steps to eating slowly and mindfully:

**Step 1: Set aside time to eat.** For many of us, eating is just a means to an end, to be over with as quickly and as conveniently as possible. It's not uncommon to multitask, eating while we watch TV, do homework or even drive. So try to designate a block of time to eat.

**Step 2: Opt for meals with a variety of flavors and textures.** Think of how easy it is to gorge on a bowl of something homogeneous, like macaroni and cheese. A dish with variety, however, will be a little different in every bite.

**Step 3: Use smaller utensils.** The less you can fit onto your fork and spoon, the slower you’ll eat. Look for utensils that are designed for children.

**Step 4: Set a minimum number of chews for every bite.** This is ancient advice, but nonetheless, still wise advice. Start with a low number like 10, and over timework your way up to 20 or more. This slows you down, helps ease digestion, and even sets you up for the next step...

**Step 5: Deliberately taste your food.** Make a conscious effort to pay attention to flavors and textures. You might even want to keep a journal. The more descriptive you are the better. You’ll probably find that you begin to appreciate well-prepared (and well-grown) food in ways you never would have otherwise!