the mindfulness clinic

28 Simple Steps Toward Mindful Eating

Charlotte Thaarup-Owen

B. Teach, DipFDR (Vic), DipMeditation, DipEd (London University)
MBSR, MBEAT (Mindfulness Based Eating), CBMT.

themindfulnessclinic

We help people feel better...much better

+61 0432 724 764

- RETREATS
- WORKSHOPS
- CONVERSATIONS
- PUBLIC SPEAKING
- COACHING

Welcome to the Mindfulness Clinic. Mindful eating means stepping out of dieting and identification with the appearance of body and into the present, into awareness and uncovering our relationship with food and the body. This opens our awareness to the organic nature of our body, our interconnectedness and the various reasons we eat.

Here are 28 Things You Can Do Right Now To Have a Better Relationship With Food.

General Mindful Eating Tips

- Start the mindfulness as you prepare the food, sense the texture, the look, the smell, the ‘‘feeling’ of the food.

- Don't wait until you're too hungry. One of the keys to conscious eating is to keep your body adequately fed to avoid becoming overly hungry which increases the chance that you'll overeat and/or eat the ‘wrong’ things.

- Buy food that supports you in eating well and wisely.

- Setting the table nicely or placing yourself in a nice spot adds to the experience of eating, making it an occasion.

- Eat without distractions. If you eat while you're distracted by watching television, driving, or talking on the telephone, you can’t eat mindfully. One of the reasons mindful eating helps to regulate our appetite is that we experience the emotional feel good factor from eating. We don’t do that when we are distracted or preoccupied with other things while eating.

- Sit down to eat. Choose one or two particular areas at home and at work that are only used for eating and eat only there. For example, do not eat while standing over the sink, peering into the refrigerator or sitting in bed.

- Place the right amount on your plate. It can be a good idea to use a smaller plate as the amount of food will naturally look less on a large plate.

themindfulnessclinic

We help people feel better...much better

+61 0432 724 764

- RETREATS
- WORKSHOPS
- CONVERSATIONS
- PUBLIC SPEAKING
- COACHING

Before Eating

- Slow down, notice the breath.
- Start by recognizing the type of hunger you are experiencing before you begin eating. Check in with eyes, nose, mouth/tongue, stomach, heart, mind and cell hunger. If it is not cell hunger then see if you can delay gratification - pay close attention to body sensations and thoughts that knock on your door.
- Take a close look at the food. Notice colours, smells, shapes and arrangements.
- List the foods you see.
- List all the plants and animals that are represented in the food. Add a "thank-you" to each plant or animal for its sacrifice.
- Think about the human effort it took to get the food to you. How many people were really involved?
- This sets the stage for you to continue your mindfulness during your eating.

themindfulnessclinic

We help people feel better...much better

+61 0432 724 764

- RETREATS
- WORKSHOPS
- CONVERSATIONS
- PUBLIC SPEAKING
- COACHING

Paying attention to eating

- Eat until you're satisfied.
- Eat (with intention of being) in full view of others.
- Eat with enjoyment, gusto and pleasure.
- Slow down your eating
- Chew well, try to chew each mouthful 15-20 times before swallowing.
- Pay attention to the chewing, the texture of the food, the flavour, the sound, the inclination to swallow and what happens then…
- Drink slowly, we don't taste when we gulp, swirl the fluid around a bit before swallowing, one mouthful at a time.
- Put down the fork or knife in between each mouthful and don't pick them up again till the food in the mouth is chewed completely and swallowed. Notice the impulses that arise.
- Try eating with the non-dominant hand.

themindfulnessclinic

We help people feel better...much better

+61 0432 724 764

- RETREATS
- WORKSHOPS
- CONVERSATIONS
- PUBLIC SPEAKING
- COACHING

Establish a new relationship with the body

- Check in with the body; dear body, I am listening
- Check in with the body many times a day; dear body, what are your needs?
- Close the eyes and check in with the body, notice where there is no discomfort.
- Shifting from ‘outside’ judging eyes to ‘Insight’ eyes that are just present, kind and observing.
- See if you can sense the body’s response the food in front of you, see if you can sense whether the body (not the mind or the heart) wants it.
- Take a few breaths before you start eating and thank the body.

Charlotte Thaarup-Owen, B. Teach, DipFDR (Vic), DipMeditation, DipEd (London University) MBSR, MBEAT (Mindfulness Based Eating), CBMT.

Charlotte has over 20 years experience in corporate training, mediation and clinical mindfulness. She is passionate about supporting women in freeing themselves of the endless harsh preoccupation with the body, weight and food.

For more Mindful Eating advice and information, join us on our Facebook Page