

This is a reflective exercises to help you understand and become aware of your eating patterns. These questions can help you become more mindful in your choices. Remember, one of the essential elements of mindfulness, is 'non-judgement'. These exercises are therefore intended to just help you become aware of your patterns from a non-judgemental space and to have a choice to change your current pattern.

Why? Why do I eat?

- Why do I think I eat?
- Am I really aware of all the situations and/or emotions that trigger me to want to eat when I'm not hungry?
- Do I find myself eating even though I said I wouldn't? Why?
- Have I tried a lot of diets? What happened? How did they work for me long term? Why?

When? When do I eat?

- How often do I feel like eating? Why?
- How do I know if I'm hungry?
- Can I tell the difference between physical hunger and head hunger?
- How could I redirect my attention away from food until I'm hungry?
- What could I do to cope better with my emotional triggers for eating when I'm not hungry?
- When does "I want a brownie" really mean "I want a break"?
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What? What do I eat?

- What do I eat in a typical day?
- Would an Awareness Journal help me recognize patterns?
- What types of foods do I feel like eating when I'm eating for emotional reasons? Why?
- Do I restrict myself from eating certain foods, then later give in and overeat those foods?
- Do I feel guilty when I eat?
- Am I afraid of losing control when I eat certain foods?
- What health issues do I need to be aware of when deciding what to eat?
- What could I eat that would help me feel better and become healthier?
- What kind of foods could I keep on hand to eat when I'm hungry?
- How could I make the perfect food choice every time to satisfy both my body and my mind?
- Is it really possible to eat *anything* but not *everything*?



How? How do I eat?

- Do I eat while I'm distracted?
- Do I truly eat as though I love food?
- Do I eat fast, barely tasting my food?
- Do I eat differently in private than I do in public?
- Could I write an article for a gourmet magazine about the last meal I ate?

How Much? How much do I eat?

- How do I feel when I'm done eating?
- Do I like the way I feel?
- Do I feel compelled to clean my plate?
- If I'm not hungry when I start eating, how do I know when to stop?
- What situations or emotions trigger me to overeat?
- What could I do to address my triggers for overeating more effectively?
- What do I do after those times I eat too much anyway?

Where? Where do I invest the energy I consume?

- Am I physically active?
- Do I watch too much TV or spend too much free time in front of the computer?
- How do I feel about exercise?
- Do I use exercise to punish myself for eating or to earn the right to eat?
- What else do I do with my energy (i.e. play with my children; work on my hobbies; volunteer; travel; spend time with friends...)?
- Is there anything else I'd like to do that I'm not doing now?
- What are my goals for my relationships, my career, and my life?
- Do I practice regular and meaningful self-care in order to buffer myself from life stress?

(approx time: 30-45 mins)