Mindful Change Process, Mindfulness of Body/Emotions, & The Mindful Eating Journey

Welcome!
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Overview

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7 Themes of the Mindful Eating Journey
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• Focus on what is working
• Closure
Embracing Mindful Change

Importance of the Change Process
Two Change Models
Power of Commitment
Giving up smoking is the easiest thing in the world.
I know because I’ve done it thousands of times.
-- Mark Twain
In two decades I’ve lost a total of 789 pounds. I should be hanging from a charm bracelet.

--Erma Bombeck
The Truth About Diets

Diets create a “failure” or “success” mentality.

Inability to maintain diets lower one’s sense of self-efficacy and leads to low self-esteem.

Diets often take away the foods that people like and enjoy.

Diets create preoccupation with a number, not the whole person.

Diets can produce rigid thinking around food.
The Truth About Diets

2007 National Institute of Health Study
- One of the longest and biggest head-to-head studies of the Zone, the Atkins Diet, the Ornish Diet and govt. standards.
- Differences were not significant enough to rule out chance.
- After 12-months, overweight women lost almost 10 lbs. on Atkins, compared to about 5 lbs. on the other diets.
Embracing Mindful Change

- How someone views the change process can either create a sense of confidence and efficacy, or a sense of failure and frustration.
- Mindful change means being aware of one’s own approach to change.
- Beginning of a new relationship to oneself, to the external environment, and to food itself.
Mechanical-Replacement Model of Change and Wellness

How it Works

- Requires input from an expert.
- Expert diagnoses the problem.
- Success is mostly defined by the outcome; an outcome-based determines success by fixing what is defective or not working.
- Views things in a good vs. bad perspective; good parts replace what is defective.
- This model is based on outcome as a measure of success or failure.
Mechanical-Replacement Model of Change and Wellness

**Advantages**

- Useful with independent systems allowing for replacement.
- Time required for change is highly predictable.
- Usually allows for rapid change of parts.
- Newer “perfect” or “good” parts mean fewer future problems.
- Reduced need for follow-up and monitoring.
Mechanical-Replacement Model of Change and Wellness

Disadvantages

- Doesn’t apply well to understanding emotions and feelings.
- How can you replace something that has all unique parts, such as a brain with 100 billion unique neurons?
- Limited in scope, not ideal for holistic systems.
- Dualistic in nature; tends to rate outcomes as either success or failure.
WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW?

OBSERVE THE BODY
(Posture, Sensation, Emotion, Hunger)

OBSERVE THE BREATH

OBSERVE THE MIND
(Thoughts, opinions, perceptions)
3-Step Intention Method to Increase Your ‘AQ’ Awareness Quotient

If you want to improve your moment-to-moment mindful awareness, all you need to do is…
3-Step Intention Method to Increase Your ‘AQ’ Awareness Quotient

♫ STOP
3-Step Intention Method to Increase Your ‘AQ’ Awareness Quotient

- STOP
- SET AN INTENTION TO CREATE or END A BREATH
3-Step Intention Method to Increase Your ‘AQ’ Awareness Quotient

- STOP
- SET AN INTENTION TO CREATE or END A BREATH
- BREATHE
3-Step Intention Method to Increase Your ‘AQ’ Awareness Quotient

- STOP
- SET AN INTENTION TO CREATE or END A BREATH
- BREATHE
- OBSERVE
3-Step Intention Method to Increase Your ‘AQ’ Awareness Quotient

- **INTENTION**
- **FOLLOW-UP**
- **OBSERVATION**
  - of your body (sensations)
  - likes-dislikes (emotions)
  - bare awareness (non-judgmental thoughts & opinions)
3-Step Intention Method to Increase Your ‘AQ’ Awareness Quotient

* RE-MINDFULNESS
Using Intention can strengthen mind-body awareness…

- when walking
- when eating
- when transitioning
- when shopping
- when speaking
- when listening
- when driving
- when…??
Mindful Acceptance Quote...

*Right now today, could you make an unconditional relationship with yourself? Just at the height you are, the weight you are, the amount of intelligence that you have, the burden of pain that you have?*

--Pema Chödrön, *Start Where Your Are*
Mindful Acceptance/Commitment Model of Change and Wellness

How it Works

- Determine what you want to change; Change is collaborative.
- Change occurs through relationship and experience.
- Success is defined as experiencing the process.
- Values learning from mistakes and accepts this as an important part of the process.
- Acceptance is NOT resignation; acceptance is WILLINGNESS to accept present situation or condition.
Mindful Acceptance-Commitment Model of Change and Wellness

How it Works

- Accepts that stress increases the tendency to return to old habits (but this tendency is not written in stone).
- Commitment to learning and practicing skills over time.
- Process-based model where change doesn’t happen all at once and where the focus is one each day—rather than on some future outcome.
Mindful Acceptance-Commitment Model of Change and Wellness

 Advantages

- Useful for complex, holistic systems.
- A non-blaming, accepting, forgiving, and gentle style of change.
- Good for understanding the effects of stress on behavior.
- Commitment and skill create reliable change and prepare for learning from mistakes.
- Good for tracking and monitoring complexity.
- Focus on skills (process) rather than success or failure (outcome).
Mindful Acceptance-Commitment Model of Change and Wellness

Disadvantages

- Requires patience and may result in frustration.
- Demands persistent effort in order to make change.
- Not focused on defining outcome-based “success”, difficult for some people.
- Not as predictable, changes may be small or even go in reverse.
Change Model Role Play

1) Introduce the acceptance/commitment method of change to a “client.”

2) Describe this model and explain the benefits of it as it applied to this client’s “issue.” (Decide on the reason the client is coming in before starting the role play.)
Body/Emotional Awareness

Getting Grounded and Centered
Grounding to Turn Away from Food
Preoccupation
"What lies at the root of all your problems in my opinion, is that you inhabit a fantasy world."
At the Movies… The Peaceful Warrior
Refocus with Grounding

Mental World of Eating Disorder Thoughts
Vs.
External and Internal Grounding

ED thoughts can keep someone locked in ruminative and rigid thinking. Ask these questions:

*What percentage of time do you spend thinking about food or body?*

*How difficult is it for you to shift away from that kind of thinking?*

*When have you managed to do that?*
Refocus with External Grounding

How it works:
** Default mode of the brain is to be spinning thoughts

** Default mode can get stuck in ruminating; links past memories with the present and projects anxiety or worry into the future

** Present Moment Awareness (such as by grounding in the external world) activates observational circuits in the brain

** Present Moment Awareness reduces focus on “self”.

** Present moment awareness on the body the pulls the plug on the brain’s storytelling or ruminating default mode.
Palm the Present Moment

Dropping into the Body—

Intervention for:

Racing, Anxious Thoughts, Rumination, and Stress, Feelings of Overload and Overstimulation
3 Types of Sense Grounding

Grounding Demonstration

– Mental Grounding
– Physical Grounding
– Soothing Grounding

Seeking Safety by Lisa Najavits
Using Grounding with Clients

Creating a Grounding Practice for Clients:

** Explore with clients how to cultivate the practice of being present to break the old habit of preoccupying on food.

** Each day, write down in a journal all the new things that you noticed that day

** Take photos; talk to new people; learn something new about your environment;

** Notice when your thoughts are preoccupied with ED; then ground in the external world.
7 Steps of Eating

Normal and Mindful Eating
Mindful Journey Quote...

The most important thing in spiritual practice is food...when you eat, how you eat, why you eat.

-- The Buddha
Seeing Yourself Eat

- For 10 minutes, use visualization to rehearse your eating, like athletes do to improve performance in real-time situations.

- Now, practice for 10 minutes with the food you have brought.
4-Steps of Normal Eating

Most turkeys taste better the day after; my mother’s tasted better the day before.

--Rita Rudner
4-Steps of “Normal” Eating

- **Step 1**
  - *Normal eaters tend to be aware of and listen to their hunger.* They notice their body's hunger and cravings. They notice the signals that mean they need energy, and they usually respond to these signals by seeking out food *at that time*, rather than wait.
  - They recognize their specific body hunger signals.
  - They seek out food in a reasonable amount of time, not waiting until the signals get severe.
  - They may have an emergency snack or back-up food in case a meal is not readily available.
4-Steps of “Normal” Eating

Step 2

Typically, normal eaters choose from a wide variety of satisfying foods. Normal eaters are not primarily rigid, limiting or "extreme eaters." They tend to base their choices on such things as:

- The energy quality of a food.
- Sensing their body's needs or a “taste” for something.
- They do not base food choices exclusively on external based decisions such as calories or diets that permit only certain kinds of food (carbohydrate, fat, protein, fiber).
4-Steps of “Normal” Eating

**Step 3**

*Normal eaters enjoy and get pleasure from their food.*

They do this by tasting and noticing flavor as they eat. They typically do the following:

- Savor and enjoy the taste of food.
- Use food socially.
- Eat with some degree of moderation and are aware of the consequences of how and what they eat.
- May reward with food in moderation.
4-Steps of “Normal” Eating

- **Step 4**
  - *Normal eaters tend to stop eating when their hunger has been filled.* Even though some normal eaters may feel compelled to eat everything on the plate, they may stop eating before they feel uncomfortable.
  - (Note—Feeling *uncomfortable* is not the same for a normal eater as for someone who restricts and finds it difficult to eat a normal-sized meal. For someone who restricts, discomfort while eating just an adequate amount could take a few weeks or even longer to disappear.)
I cook with wine.
Sometimes I even add it to the food.
--W.C. Fields
3-Steps of Mindful Eating

**Step 1**

*Mindful eaters transition into mealtime centered and aware of their emotions.* They don't get "blind-sided" by letting their emotions set them up for a mindless eating event. They accomplish this by remembering to:

- Pay attention to their emotions and thoughts before eating.
- Think about where, when, and who to eat with in advance in order to create a pleasant, calm experience.
3-Steps of Mindful Eating

🌟 Step 2
🌟 *Mindful eaters slow down and mindfully experience food.* The benefit of slowing down for mindful eaters is that it takes about 20 minutes for the blood sugar change in the body to register in the brain as "fullness". This helps them eat moderately.

Strategies to slow down include:
- Using the S-T-O-P method at the meal.
- Take breaths between bites.
- Chewing each bite for 10-20 times.
3-Steps of Mindful Eating

**Step 3**

*Mindful eaters transition smoothly out of mealtime.* Transition is an important means of letting go of the meal and moving to the next activity or phase of your day. When leaving the meal, mindful eaters practice the following:

- Accept their emotions and thoughts about their choices—even unpleasant ones—and don't dwell on them. They let go of them and leave them at the table.
- Take a short walk or other pleasant mindful activity.
- Forgive the past (meal, emotions, etc.) then resume previous work or activity mindful of the new moment.
- Use a ritual, such as having a cup of tea in a different location.
Group Exercise on Normal and Mindful Eating

Brainstorm as many ideas as you can for different ways that patients can more smoothly transition into and/or out of mealtimes where they may be having a problem.
7-Themes of the Mindful Eating Journey
Theme 1 - Entry

- How we enter a meal is just as important as any other aspect of food and awareness.
- Where is your mind? Are you in the past? Thinking about the future?
- Be aware of your hunger before you enter the meal. Eat when your hunger is in the 4-6 range, not the 7-10 range.
  1) Rate your hunger on a 1-10 scale. Is this physical hunger?
- Be aware of emotions when entering a meal. If angry or stressed you can react by eating in a less than beneficial way. If struggling with emotions, you can:
  1) Write down your thoughts and emotions.
  2) Focus on mindful breathing or walking to discharge tension.
  3) Redirect on attention on your strengths, such as the last time you ate a healthy meal, felt positive about something you did, etc.

Approach your meal as you would a work of art.
Theme 2 - Choices

Each day, the average person makes 119 choices related to food. But there are even many MORE choices you could make, such as:

What type of food(s) would satisfy the hunger you feel right now? Be willing to expand your food variety and options.

How much food would satisfy the hunger you feel right now? This would mean ordering quantity of food by your hunger as opposed to by the appetite.

Where can you eat your food that will make for an enjoyable meal, as opposed to a distracted, unsatisfying one? You can choose to create an island of peace around mealtime by turning off the TV, setting the table, lighting a candle, etc.

Who can you eat with that enhances the experience? 

*Don’t be casual about how, when, what, and where you eat.*
Theme 3 - Preparations

- There are no unimportant jobs when it comes to kitchen preparation.
- St. Benedict wrote: “Regard all utensils and goods of the monastery as sacred vessels of the altar.”
- Always take time to clean the clutter in your kitchen workspace.
- Try new recipes. Be mindfully present at each stage of preparation, cleaning, washing, chopping, cooking, etc.
- Appreciate and experiment in learning how seasonal foods, whole foods, and local foods flavors combine.
- Set the preparation intention: “May I use the power of focused attention to witness each step of preparation.”
- Have patience for yourself, and watch for any tendency to make your meal “perfect”. Accept the process as you become more skillful.

A watched pot never boils over.
Theme 4 - Rituals

- Confucius once said: “Even dogs and horses get fed.”
- A personalized ritual can change the relationship you have with food in that moment.
- Recite a ritual blessing or poem any time you need it to get strength and courage at mealtime.
- A mindfulness meditation, reflection, or sacred object (photo, candle, etc.) can help keep you centered while eating.
- Ritual blessings bring a sense of meaning and dignity to the table, and they can serve many purposes:
  1) They break old patterns by slowing you down.
  2) They hallow food and put us in touch with the sacred aspects of food and eating.
  3) They bring one into touch with how food connects us to others appreciating the effort and energy that goes into each morsel.

*Invite stillness, peace and freedom with a mealtime ritual.*
James Joyce once wrote: “Mr. Duffy lived a short distance from his body.” How close to are you to your body when eating?

Practice visualizing your eating style before you sit down to eat. See yourself eating with grace, dignity, slowly, and healthfully.

When sitting down to eat, be aware of your body posture.

Rate your hunger when you start eating and every 5 to 10 minutes during the meal.

Take three mindful breathes to center before starting any meal.

Eat slowly, using the S-T-O-P mindfulness eating method for your first four bites. Chew frequently.

Set intentions for each bite.

Notice color, texture, taste, desire, thoughts, emotions, and memories. Come back to directly tasting your food in the moment.

Leave some food on your plate.

*Eat the meal in front of you now. Don’t let it eat at you later.*
Theme 6 - Community

- Mark Twain said: “The best way to cheer yourself up is to cheer somebody else up.”
- Offer your food hospitality to others, a friend, a neighbor, others without company.
- Introduce new foods to your family and others. Think about Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), farmer’s markets, etc.
- Be forgiving, compassionate, and non-judgmental of how others eat. You might go to a buffet restaurant just to practice being non-blaming.
- During holidays, some feel that to deny food is to deny you are joining in; still you can take responsibility for what you eat, even when you are a guest. Eat slowly, and set the intention of how you will eat before you go.
- As a host, surrender to joyful uncertainty as you invite others to eat with you.
- Give others a voice at mealtime and share your stories.

Each foodstuff connects us to our planet and community.
Theme 7 - Departure

- Benedictine brothers of Mt. Calvary Monastery after mass say, “May peace be with you.”
- Transition after mealtime can bring stress and uncertainty.
- Pay attention to your feelings after the meal: fullness, emotions, anxiety, guilt, etc. You can “breathe into” the feeling to let it go.
- A practice or ritual after mealtime can bring a sense of closure and peace. This is a signal that the meal has ended.
- Possible departure practices include: a cup of tea in a different room; a short, brisk walk; cleaning dishes mindfully, etc.
- Accept today’s meal choices. If you find that you emotionally beat yourself up after eating: 1) stop the browbeating, 2) live with the immediate consequences, and 3) take a vow to be more mindful and plan better at the next meal. You will get another chance since you eat over 10,000 meals every 10 years!
- Reflect on your body’s elimination process as an example of your body’s miraculous biological system.

Light the candle of awareness at the end of your meal.
Power of Gratitude

Prefrontal Friendly Practice
Focuses on What’s Working
Increases Social Connections
Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more.

It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity.

It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.

-- Melody Beattie
Things We Sometimes Forget to Have Gratitude For…
Opposable Thumbs

image: www.fimage: www.freeimages.co.ukreeimages.co.uk
Cordless Phones

image: www.fimage: www.freeimages.co.ukreeimages.co.uk
Free Refills!!
Gratitude

Depression Intervention:

2003 study* had participants write down five things they were grateful for during the week for a period of 10 weeks. Results showed these people were:

• 25% happier than persons who wrote down their day’s frustrations or simply listed the day’s events.
• More optimistic about the future.
• Felt better about their lives.
• Participated in one and a half hours more exercise per week than those in the control groups.

The gratitude group reported significantly bigger increases in their happiness levels from before to after the intervention.” It was only necessary for participants in this study to do the practice once a week, such as on a Sunday night, for the benefits to be felt.”

---Sonja Lyubomirsky in her book, *The How of Happiness*
Gratitude Practice

1. Write down one thing you were grateful for in the past week.

2. Tell the story behind that gratitude to another.
G.L.A.D. Technique*

G.L.A.D. is an acronym for finding joy and balance using cognitive, behavioral and mindfulness skills

G - find one Gratitude you’re thankful for today
L - find one new thing you Learned today
A - find one Accomplishment you did today
D - find one thing of Delight that touched you today

Journal or write these on an index card

*G.L.A.D. Technique by Donald Altman, M.A., LPC
Lunch (or daily meal) Practice

🌟 For Today’s Lunch:
🌟 Rate your hunger level (1-10) before, during and after the meal. Sense the kind of food that will satisfy this hunger.
🌟 Order by the amount of food that you think will satisfy this hunger (as opposed to ordering by taste.)
🌟 Take three diaphragmatic breaths before eating.
🌟 Use the 4-Bite Mindful method to start the meal.
🌟 Intentionally leave some food on the plate when you are done eating.