

Mindful Eating

When we eat mindfully we give our full attention to the food we are eating, noting how it makes us feel. Here are some ways to eat mindfully, gaining the most benefit from your food:

- Make your dining area a pleasurable place to be; free from clutter and mess, and with nice lighting, flowers or a lovely view.
- Before your meal, pause for a moment to relax your body, deepen your breathing and reflect on what you are about to eat.
- Once you start to eat, savour every mouthful. As the food interacts with each of your senses – sight, smell, touch, sound and taste – notice any sensations and emotions that arise.
- After your meal, notice any changes in energy, your mood and other aspects of your wellbeing. Keep a note of your response if you wish.
- If you can, make some meals a social occasion to enjoy with friends and family.

You don't have to be with others to celebrate the wonder of food; eating your favourite meal in the peace and quiet of your own company can be very enjoyable.

- Take 2 changing breaths.
- First of all bring your awareness to your body. Notice how you feel.
 - Are you hungry? – What does your body need to nourish you?
- Choose what you need to eat.
- Notice how you feel as you prepare the food.
- Notice the colour, texture, shape, smell, the 'feel' of your food on your plate
- Pause for a moment before taking a mouthful.
- Taste your food. Notice the texture and flavours of your food in your mouth and your body's response to it. Chew well.
- Take time to appreciate it. Eat quietly and slowly being mindful of the taste and smell and feel of the food in your mouth.
- See if you can pay attention to how you feel straight after eating and maybe a couple of hours later. You may want to take notes of anything you notice.