

R.E.A.L. GoalSM: Mindful Eating

(Realistic, Easy, Attainable, Life Goals)

Example: I will be more mindful, present, and aware of my food choices and eating.

Six ways to practice mindful eating

Mindless eating

1. Eating past full and ignoring your body's signals
2. Eating when emotions tell us to eat (e.g.,: sad, bored, lonely)
3. Eating alone, at random times and places
4. Eating foods that are emotionally comforting
5. Eating and multitasking
6. Considering a meal an end product

Mindful eating

1. Listening to your body and stopping when full
2. Eating when our bodies tell us to eat (e.g.,: stomach growling, energy low)
3. Eating with others, at set times and places
4. Eating food that are nutritionally healthy
5. When eating, just eat
6. Considering where foods come from.

Let your body catch up to your brain: Eating rapidly past full and ignoring your body's signals vs. slowing down and eating and stopping when your body says it's full. Slowing down is one of the best ways we can get our mind and body to communicate what we really need for nutrition. Simple ways to slow down include sitting down to eat, chewing each bite 25 times (or more), and setting your fork down between bites.

Know your body's hunger signals: Are you responding to an emotional want or responding to your body's needs? We often listen first to our minds, but like many mindfulness practices, we might discover more wisdom by turning to our bodies first. Is your stomach growling, energy low, or feeling a little lightheaded? We tend to eat when our mind tells us to rather than our bodies. Ask yourself: *What are my body's hunger signals, and what are my emotional triggers?*

Cultivate a mindful kitchen: Eating alone and randomly vs. eating with others at set times and places. A way we eat mindlessly is by wandering around, looking through cabinets, and eating at random times and places rather than thinking proactively about our meals and snacks. This prevents us from developing healthy environmental cues about what and how much to eat and wires our brains for new cues for eating that are not always ideal. Having a mindful kitchen means organizing and caring for your kitchen space, so it encourages healthy eating and nourishing gatherings. Consider what you bring into your kitchen. Are healthy foods handy? What kinds of foods are in sight?

Connect more deeply with your food: Consider where food comes from vs. thinking of food as an end product. Many of us don't consider where our meal comes from beyond the supermarket. When we pause to consider all of the people involved in the meal, it is hard not to feel both grateful and interconnected. Be mindful of the water, soil, and other elements that were part of its creation as you sit down to eat.

Attend to your plate: Distracted eating vs. just eating. Multitasking and eating is a recipe for not being able to listen to your body's wants and needs. With your next meal, try just eating with no screens or distractions.

Check out these links to learn more:

- [Healthline](#): Mindful Eating 101 – A Beginner’s Guide
- [The Center for Mindful Eating](#)



Explore more [Real Goals and Supplemental Resources](#)

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