



The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed

EPISODE #13

TITLE: 'Mindfulness Eating' In Action: The WPIE Guided Meal Meditation

What do you get when you merge the ancient Buddhist teaching of mindfulness with food, eating, and modern nutritional science? Answer: A way of eating that leads to easing odds of overeating and weight gain. Welcome to The WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation!

TRANSCRIPT

Hello! Welcome to The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed. TODAY'S TOPIC: Put 'Mindfulness Eating' Into Action with The WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation.

The benefit? Eat less and weigh less. Without dieting.

I'm Deborah Kesten—nutrition researcher and host of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed, and I'm on a mission: To give you the science-backed, weight-loss wisdom you need to eat less and weigh less. Without dieting.

In each episode, I'll translate cutting-edge weight-loss research into actions you can take that can make a real difference in your weight and well-being.

LET'S GET STARTED!

Mindfulness Eating in Action

Today's discussion starts in Italy. Imagine it's lunchtime on a beautiful spring day, and an Italian family--12 people in total--are dining al fresco in their outdoor garden. Over the din of pleasant conversation, the *primo*, meaning first course, arrives. It includes spaghetti with fresh-made tomato sauce the grandmother simmered on the stovetop for an hour earlier in the day. When her eldest daughter tastes the sauce, she instantly experiences a burst of delicious flavors. In response, she spontaneously places her thumb against her four fingers and brings them to her lips; then makes a loud kissing sound.

This is mindfulness eating in action. Taking time to savor flavor. Appreciating the food. Fresh food cooked with care. Positive feelings. Dining in a lovely atmosphere. And enjoying the moments of the meal with others. These are the 'ingredients' of the Whole Person Integrative Eating mindfulness meal meditation.

Scores of studies show that eating with a mindfulness consciousness has many health benefits. Not only does my research on Whole Person Integrative Eating show Mindfulness Eating increases odds of weight loss, each element of The WPIE Mindfulness Eating Meditation that I'm walking you through today--step-by-step--has still more benefits.

For instance, steps number 9 & 10, **Unite socially**, and **Infuse food with loving regard**, improve the metabolism of food--so much so that eating with others and eating with a loving consciousness may protect against heart disease. Step #4, **Tune into feelings** and eating with positive emotions, lessens

Emotional Eating episodes. And step #5, **Craft amiable ambiances**--both *emotionally* and *aesthetically*--may lower odds of gaining weight.

In other words, the type of meditation you'll be experiencing today, called Mindfulness Eating, is linked with a cornucopia of physical and mental health benefits. This is the power of the Whole Person Integrative Eating Guided Meal Meditation that I'm walking you through today. AND that I've made available for you on a FREE AUDIO for you to listen to, so you can put mindfulness eating into action. One meal at a time.

Meet Ancient-New Meditation

To begin... Let's get more familiar with the ancient-new practice of mindfulness meditation.

In the East, yogis say it leads to a super-conscious state that emerges from the cessation of thought; Taoists tell us it helps “to come into harmony with all things and all moments”; while devotees of Zen Buddhism present it as a path to illumination. In the West, meditation has more often been linked to the mystical and monastic. For instance, the *Cabala*, a Jewish mystical teaching, turns to meditation to carry consciousness through various “gateways,” while early Christian monks and saints used meditation as a stringent contemplative process to achieve spiritual exaltation.

Clearly, meditation has been a tradition for thousands of years. The word *meditation* comes from the Latin *meditari*, which implies “deep, continued reflection, a concentrated dwelling in thought.” But while it is often linked with the concept of contemplation, it may also involve emptying the mind by eliminating *thoughts* from consciousness (this is *apophatic* meditation) or holding a specific *image*, *idea*, or *word* in the mind's eye (*cataphalic* meditation).

Whether the source of meditation techniques comes from ancient Eastern or Western traditions—or the more modern trend to merge meditation techniques with mindfulness to manage stress—the goal is the same: to enhance relaxation and self-awareness and to suffuse mind, heart, and soul with a sense of unity, union, and connection.

From Task-Snacking to Mindfulness Eating

The type of meditation we're discussing today is Mindfulness Eating. In a few moments, I'm going to take you through each 10-step element of the Whole Person Integrative Eating Mindfulness Eating meditation I created--which led to eating less and weighing less in the research behavioral scientist Larry Scherwitz, PhD and I did with more than 5200 people.

If you want to refresh your memory about the benefits of mindfulness eating, please visit last week's Episode #11: "The Weight Loss Power of Mindfulness Eating (Hint: It's a Lifetime Practice!).

A few moments ago, I mentioned that meditation is probably mostly known for its link to relaxing and de-stressing. But when you *eat* with what I call a 'meditative consciousness,' there are even more benefits.

Perhaps philosopher and spiritual teacher O.M. Aivanhov most beautifully describes the link between food, meditative awareness, and well-being. He writes in his book, *The Yoga of Nutrition*:

To receive the most subtle particles in the food, you must be fully conscious, wide awake, full of love. If the entire system is ready to receive food in that perfect way, then the food is moved to pour out its hidden riches . . . when food opens itself, it gives you all that it has in the way of pure, divine energies.

—O.M. Aivanhov, *The Yoga of Nutrition*

What O.M. Aivanhov is describing is the opposite of how most Americans eat, which I describe with the new-normal overeating style I call **Task-Snacking**. A brief refresher: Behavioral scientist—and my

husband—Larry Scherwitz, PhD, who is also Co-founder of Whole Person Integrative Eating, and I, identified 7 styles of eating that lead to overeating and overweight. And we call one of those overeating styles, **Task-Snacking**.

What does the new-normal overeating style of Task Snacking look like? Have you ever meandered down the street while munching? If so, you're task snacking. Do you watch TV, work at your computer, or drive while eating? These are more task-snacking behaviors. As a matter of fact, doing other things while eating is so common in our culture, it's become normal. Not only do most of us not pay much attention to where we're eating and what we're doing while we're eating, we also don't believe that these two factors have anything to do with our weight. But they do.

Each element in today's Mindfulness Eating meditation is an antidote to each overeating style--especially the Task Snacking overeating style. Then there's this: Each element strongly influences the way in which food is metabolized and in turn, your weight and well-being. As meaningful to your weight and well-being--as I discussed in Episode 4: "Lost...Now Found: The Healing Power of the '4 Facets of Food,'"--when the elements of The Mindfulness Meal Meditation are integrated and practiced together, our published research on Whole Person Integrative Eating links them with eating less and weighing less. Without dieting.

Introduction to the 'Mindfulness Eating' Meditation

Let's get started with the WPIE Mindfulness Eating meditation.

In his book *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*, Deepak Chopra writes: "The quality of one's life depends on the quality of attention." So too are your weight and mind-body well-being strongly influenced by the "quality of attention" you bring to food and eating. Not only may giving quality attention to each element of the Whole Person Integrative Eating dietary lifestyle ward off weight but it also holds the power to balance emotions, digestion, the absorption of nutrients, blood-sugar levels, and more.

Welcome to the WPIE guided mindfulness meal meditation.

As you practice integrating each ingredient into the experience of eating, more and more, you'll become empowered to experience food as the symphonic masterpiece that it is; that plays the notes you need to overcome the new-normal overeating styles by replacing them with the elements of the Whole Person Integrative Eating (WPIE) dietary lifestyle: fresh food, positive feelings, mindfulness, gratitude, sensory and loving regard, amiable ambiance, and social connection.

Another helpful distinction is this: I created the WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation to empower you to turn Whole Person Integrative Eating into an actual *practice*, a health-enhancing relationship to food and eating. To reap the rewards, keep in mind it's a lifetime practice, something you get better and better at over time--kinda like a yoga practice. Be patient. And be compassionate with yourself. And enjoy!

Creating Conscious Connection: Experience the WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation

The *intention* behind the Whole Person Integrative Eating Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation is to show you how to bring a meditative awareness to connect to food and eating, so that you nourish body, mind, and soul each time you eat, and in the process you up your odds of losing weight and keeping it off. Achieving such success calls for creating a conscious connection to all elements of the Whole Person Integrative Eating dietary lifestyle I've been discussing in each episode of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed podcast.

Here are the key steps you'll need to practice, internalize, and integrate the WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation each time you eat.

GETTING READY

To get ready... First familiarize yourself with the whole meditation

Review the Whole Person Integrative Eating Meal Meditation that follows--either by reading the Transcript at HealingSecretsPodcast.com, listening to the FREE AUDIO, or looking over the shorter version in the 'ARTICLE' CTA at HealingSecretsPodcast.com.

All the while, please keep in mind I created the WPIE Mindfulness Eating meditation so you can internalize, apply, and benefit from each element of the Whole Person Integrative Eating dietary lifestyle each time you eat.

FIRST: MEET 'MUDRAS'

Meet Mudras

Symbolic hand gestures used during meditation, called *mudras*, have stood at the center of meditative awareness for ages. In the practice of yoga, for instance, mudras are used with the intention of drawing yourself inward and channeling your body's energy flow. The intention of the mudra used in the Mindfulness Meal Meditation is to direct energy from both your heart *chakra*, or energy center, and your hands, into your food.

Here are other 'getting ready' steps:

SECOND: *Just before eating, position yourself* the same way each time you dine. For instance, perhaps you may prefer to fold your hands gently in your lap, or to rest them on the table.

THIRD: Now simply relax by inhaling deeply, then exhaling slowly. Do this three times. Inhale to the count of five; pause a moment; exhale to the count of eight.

FOURTH: Put the world on pause. As you weave together the moments of the WPIE Guided Mindfulness Eating Meditation, the rest of the world must wait.

HERE IS THE 10-STEP WPIE 'MINDFULNESS EATING' MEDITATION



This is what the 'mudra' (Step #2) in the meditation looks like.

Step #1.

Visualize. While looking at the food before you, envision a ball of golden liquid light several inches above your head. Then imagine the golden liquid melting, then flowing through the top of your head (the crown *chakra*, or energy center), and then throughout your arms, hands, torso, legs, and feet.

Step #2.

Create a mudra. Continuing to envision golden light throughout your body, position your hands as if there were a small beach ball hovering just over your food and your hands are holding that beach ball. As you

hold your hands above your food, envision rays of the golden liquid light emanating from your heart center (chakra) and hands into the food before you.

Step #3.

Choose fresh, whole foods. Holding regard for food in your heart, focus on what you are eating. Is the food in front of you fresh and whole? Does the meal include fresh, whole plant-based foods (vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans and peas, nuts and seeds)? Or lean fish, poultry, meat, or dairy? Or is it fast food and processed? In other words, have you taken the time to choose food that is a positive life force, a nurturer, a gift that recharges and sustains?

Step #4.

Tune into feelings. Continuing to relax and breathe deeply, identify how you are feeling. First, are you feeling hungry? And if so, how hungry: a little, somewhat, or a lot? Use this knowledge to make a decision about how much or how little you want to eat. Also, are you filled with positive emotions and loving regard for food? Or do you need to release negative feelings—such as anger and anxiety—before eating?

Step #5.

Craft amiable ambiances. What are your *external* psychological and aesthetic atmospheres? If you're with people, is there tension? Arguing? Anger? Or are people talking, laughing, and enjoying themselves? What kinds of sounds surround you? Are you—and your surroundings—calm and quiet? Or are you—and the people around you—distracted and busy? Continue to focus on both the psychological vibe and your surroundings throughout your meal.

Step #6.

Practice mindfulness. Eating mindfully—paying attention, intentionally—includes bringing a meditative awareness to all elements of the WPIE dietary lifestyle. Consider: Is the food before you nourishing...or not? How are you feeling? Is the external environment pleasant and welcoming? Are you holding gratitude and loving regard in your heart? Be aware of the colors, fragrance and flavor of the food. Is there a lot of food? Or not? Are you eating with, or thinking about, people you like?

Step #7.

Be appreciative. Continuing to hold the imaginary ball over your food, while remaining calm and relaxed, feel appreciation for the food before you. Consider expressing your gratitude with a *mantra*—a word or sound that you repeat that aids concentration or mindfulness—either silently or verbally. This could be a blessing or prayer. Or simply 'shoot an arrow prayer' and say thanks for the food in front of you.

Step #8.

Practice sensory regard. The WPIE Mindfulness Meal Meditation also includes bringing loving regard to food and being aware that your senses play an important part in the experience of the WPIE dietary lifestyle. Look at the food in front of you. What colors do you see? Is the fragrance and flavor of the food sweet or sour? Is the food hot, warm, or chilled? Continuing to hold the “beach ball” mudra over your food, and envisioning golden rays from your heart and hands to your food, “flavor” your food with loving regard.

Step #9.

Unite socially. If you are dining with others, envision a ray or thread of the golden liquid connecting your heart center to the heart center of the other person or people at the table. If you're alone, connect the golden thread to a memory of a person, or people, with whom you've enjoyed memorable meals.

Step #10.

Infuse food with loving regard. The WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation calls for evoking loving intention, filling your mind-body with loving regard, and then projecting it onto the food. To do this, focus again on the golden energy flowing through you. As your hands continue to surround both sides of the dish, visualize or project rays of the golden light into your food. In this way, you “flavor” both yourself and your food with loving intention.

Now, feeling relaxed and calm, with awareness of your *internal* (feelings, appreciation, mindfulness, loving regard) and *external* (the food, physical surroundings, social connection) environments, with a sense of loving connection in your heart and nonjudgmental attention on your food, it is time to begin the extraordinary experience of eating.

The Takeaway

Each time you practice the WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation—either by listening to this podcast or listening to the FREE AUDIO of “The WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation,” you’ll be metabolizing the ultimate multivitamin, one that holds the power to lead to weight loss, but also to nourish your physical, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being.

To get better at weaving together each moment of the WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation, consider listening to it each time you eat. One meal at a time.

Over time, you’ll discover that by practicing the WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation, you may overcome the overeating styles and access food’s invisible power to sustain, rejuvenate, and nourish.

Your ‘In-Action’ Exercise

A tip, step, or reflection that can contribute to your success.

So you can reap the rewards of what you discover on each episode of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed, I close each episode with an ‘**In-Action**’ Idea for you to try. This may be a **Quick-Tip** about how to implement the healing secret of food we just discussed; or a **Practical Step** you can take, such as ordering a size-down of your favorite coffee concoction. Or perhaps I’ll suggest a **Self-Insight Exercise**, an internal-reflection that can lead you closer to achieving your food-related health goals.

I’ll offer an In-Action Exercise at the end each episode that can contribute to **your transformation from today’s, ‘new-normal’ way of eating—which leads to overeating and overweight—to Whole Person Integrative Eating—which I describe as your** scientifically sound, personal guide to eating less and weighing less. Without dieting.

Consider keeping a Healing Secrets of Food Revealed journal to write about your experience with each In-Action Exercise.

YOUR IN-ACTION EXERCISE

PRACTICAL STEPS

Today’s In-Action Practical Step is twofold:

PRACTICAL STEP #1:

READ--AND CONSIDER--THE WPIE MINDFULNESS EATING GUIDELINE

Here is the Whole Person Integrative Eating (WPIE) antidote to the Task Snacking overeating style. It is the WPIE guideline for cultivating mindfulness each time you eat.

Instructions: Read the guideline slowly and carefully, then consider what eating with mindfulness would look like for you, personally.



**Task Snacking Rx:
MINDFULNESS EATING**

Bring moment-to-moment, nonjudgmental awareness to every aspect of the meal.

PRACTICAL STEP #2:**SPECIAL FEATURE: FREE AUDIO**

DOWNLOAD the FREE AUDIO

The WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation

You are invited . . .

So you can reap the rewards of mindfulness eating--which can make a big difference in your weight and well-being--I created a FREE AUDIO, 'The WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation.' It gives you the 10-step path to replacing Task-Snacking with Mindfulness Eating. It also gives you the insights you need to benefit from *all elements* of the Whole Person Integrative Eating dietary lifestyle I tell you about in Episodes 1-4 of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed podcast.

Instructions.

The instructions are simple: Listen to the audio at least once a day, every day, before you eat a meal or snack. Listen to it as often as possible, until you know it well enough to do on your own. Once you're familiar with The WPIE Guided Mindfulness Meal Meditation, you'll be able to do it in just a few moments.

TO DOWNLOAD THE FREE AUDIO

**[CLICK HERE](#) TO DOWNLOAD AND LISTEN TO THE AUDIO OF
"The WPIE GUIDED MEAL MEDITATION."**

Thank you...

If you would like a summary of today's In-Action Exercise, please visit HealingSecretsPodcast.com. Then look for the yellow light bulb next to the "In-Action" CTA. At HealingSecretsPodcast.com, you can also listen to this episode again, and read the transcript and my Article about the WPIE Mindfulness Meal Meditation. And, please consider joining The Healing Secrets Podcast Community—where I'm looking forward to meeting you.

I want to thank you for joining me today on The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed. With each show, I'll share step-by-step, science-backed insights you need to nourish 'all of you' – body, mind, soul, and social well-being – each time you eat. So you can thrive.

I'm Deborah Kesten, host of The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed.

Until next week, BE NOURISHED.

Disclaimer: This transcript is for informational purposes only. This transcript is not intended to be a substitute for professional health or weight loss advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your health professional or another qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding your condition or well-being.