



YOUR IN-ACTION EXERCISE

The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed

EPISODE #15

TITLE: The Healing Power of 'Savoring Flavors' in Food

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PRACTICAL STEPS

Today's In-Action Practical Step is twofold:

PRACTICAL STEP #1:

READ--AND CONSIDER--THE WPIE 'SENSORY DISREGARD' Rx ANTIDOTE

PAUSE & REFLECT on the Whole Person Integrative Eating (WPIE) antidote to the Sensory Disregard overeating style. It is the WPIE guideline for nourishing your senses each time you eat. Here it is:



**Sensory Disregard Rx:
NOURISH YOUR SENSES**

Savor and "flavor" food with loving regard.

PRACTICAL STEP #2:

STRATEGIES TO NOURISH YOUR SENSES

Strategies to Nourish Your Senses

Here are strategies designed to nourish your senses each time you eat. *They are simple, practical, but profound steps you can take that put the Whole Person Integrative Eating guideline--Savor and "flavor" food with loving regard--into action each time you eat.*

Satisfy your senses. Identify the *colors* of the plate, the utensils, the food, before and while eating. Focus on *scent* in food. Do you like it? Is it whetting your appetite so that you're anticipating that first mouthful? Savor *flavors*. Does the food taste sweet? Sour? Bitter? Salty? Astringent? Pungent?

Experience textures of the food—starting with the first bite. With your eyes closed, take a bite of food and begin to chew. Focus solely on the food in your mouth. Can you taste fantastic flavors? Are you able to identify one or more of the six tastes? Simply appreciate every single flavor.

Implement olive-oil ideas. Drizzle a little extra-virgin olive oil (grass-scented, if available) on a fresh salad made with lots of fresh veggies. Or on a piece of toasted, whole-grain bread. Or in a serving of your favorite plain, unsweetened yogurt. Another option: Place a bottle—or small bowl—of your favorite olive oil on the dining table. Inhale and savor the aroma before, during, and after eating.

Infuse food with love. To turn meals into a sensory experience, “eat from a place of spirit,” says clinical psychologist Michael Mayer.²² By this, Dr. Mayer means that when you eat, you access the ancient life force of *chi*. Indeed, when you cultivate *chi*, “you merge with the mysterious energy source in the world that is life itself,” says Mayer.²² When you eat with such heartfelt regard, you make it more and more possible to be satisfied, and in turn you do not need to overeat.

Devout yogis—people who practice yoga—eat “from a place of spirit.” They follow a philosophy of *sanatana dharma*, the Sanskrit expression for the underlying, eternal, true essence of all life. Such a philosophy complements the *Bhagavad Gita*, which encourages honoring all living things—including food—as part of an interdependent oneness. When preparing or cooking food, think positive, loving thoughts. Devout Hindus believe such a mentality may be transferred into the food, enhance digestion, and empower the food to nourish body, mind, and soul.

Bring spiritual awareness to food. Earlier I told you about Judaism’s Havdalah ceremony, which focuses the senses with a “spice box” as a reminder to hold on to the Sabbath’s moments of sweetness and peace during the busy work week. Bringing similar regard to food and the entire experience of dining means you’re eating with what in Hebrew is called *Yetzirah*, the spiritual awareness of unity and connection. Consider holding this understanding, recognition, and perception in your heart when you eat.

Savor six tastes. Put the concept of the six tastes into practice. Begin by gathering the ingredients to make the unique leaf-wrapped Thai appetizer-salad called *miang kham* (described earlier in this chapter): one lime, small red onion, and red bell pepper; a piece of ginger; two tablespoons shredded and toasted coconut; some honey (perhaps a quarter cup); and about ten spinach leaves. (Note: The sauce is typically made with finely shredded coconut, ground peanuts, dried shrimp, fish sauce—*nam bplah*—and some water. The ingredient list for the sauce that is spread on the spinach or green leaf may be intimidating. If so, consider simplifying by using some honey only.)

Chop the lime, onion, pepper, and ginger into tiny pieces. Next, spread a thin layer of sauce or honey (perhaps a teaspoon) on one spinach leaf, then sprinkle a pinch of each chopped ingredient over the sticky honey. Roll up the spinach leaf, creating a small food-filled tube.

Engage your senses as you eat the *miang kham*: sight, touch, smell, taste, and hearing. *Look* at the spinach wrap you’re going to eat, and become aware of its texture and color. Is it smooth, rough, light, dark? When you take the wrap in your hands, what does it *feel* like? Is it soft, tough, grainy? Next identify the *smell* of the wrap. Is it sweet? Sour? In between? When you take a bite, do you *taste* one or more flavors? (Hint: the taste of food often changes as you chew.) Finally, how does the wrap you’re chewing *sound*? Loud or subtle?

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