



YOUR IN-ACTION EXERCISE

The Healing Secrets of Food Revealed

EPISODE #16

TITLE: Mealtime Emotions and Your Weight

YOUR IN-ACTION EXERCISE

2 PRACTICAL STEPS: CRAFT AMIABLE EATING ATMOSPHERES

PRACTICAL STEP #1:

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE WHOLE PERSON INTEGRATIVE EATING ANTIDOTE TO THE "UNAPPETIZING ATMOSPHERE" OVEREATING STYLE.

Here is the Whole Person Integrative Eating (WPIE) antidote to the Unappetizing Atmosphere overeating style. It is the WPIE guideline for cultivating an Amiable Ambiance each time you eat. Review it and reflect on it.



Unappetizing Atmosphere Rx: AMIABLE AMBIANCE

Eat in a positive *psychological* atmosphere and in pleasant *aesthetic* surroundings.

PRACTICAL STEP #2:

CRAFT AMIABLE EATING ATMOSPHERES

Here are some "jumpstart" suggestions for crafting an Amiable Ambiance each time you eat. The concept: To increase your odds of achieving and maintaining optimal weight, create affable *psychological* and *aesthetically* pleasing dining milieus as often as possible.

Crafting Amiable Eating Atmospheres

Cherish china. When Oprah did a show on "anti-aging breakthroughs," a weight-loss lifestyle was one of the topics. To highlight the elements of her successful weight loss, an audience member shared her personal success story. Along with moving more and choosing fresh food, she created an aesthetic atmosphere as part of her twenty-two-pound weight loss. "I put my portion [of food] on beautiful plates, with great style, lovely linens, crystal, [and] china, and enjoyed every morsel," she said. "No more standing in the kitchen eating out of a little container."⁷ Whenever possible, eat on quality plates with your best utensils, and sit down at a dining table to enjoy your meal even more.

Release negative emotions. Thanks to Candace Pert's research on emotions and digestion, it's safe to say that the psychological atmosphere in which you eat influences the way you metabolize food and in turn your weight and well-being. That's why you'll find it helpful to release toxic molecules of emotion when you eat. If you find yourself ruminating about something unpleasant, put your emotions on hold and press the pause button as you eat; instead, think about something agreeable. You can always return to

the problem later. Or, if the people with whom you're dining are more negative than positive, try to redirect the conversation by asking them to share something that's working well or is enjoyable in their lives.

Rest, relax. A friend of ours who is a yogi told us that after she shared a large lunch in the home of a revered family in India, her hosts invited her to lie down and rest so that she could digest the meal in a peaceful and quiet environment. In a time- and work-driven country such as the U.S., this isn't a realistic option, but what we can do is a modified version: after eating, take the time to enjoy some easygoing conversation with others, relaxing music, or an interesting article.

Walk away. A friend of mine told me that not too long after she read our research paper on the overeating styles,⁶ she was feeling hypoglycemic (weak from low blood sugar) and hungry in the middle of the day while "choring." She made the spontaneous decision to buy a sweet from a gourmet cookie shop to quickly appease her hunger. But she was dissuaded from staying by the acid-rock music that blasted from speakers and by the uninterested clerks who talked among themselves instead of taking her order. She found a friendlier place down the block for a midday munch. When you eat out—whether it's a full meal or a munchie—choose an amiable place whenever possible.

Limit lighting. One of our favorite restaurants has low-hanging lights above each booth, which we find harsh (although good friends of ours from Germany like this lighting a lot because they enjoy having a good view of their food). Each time we eat there, we think about how much more we'd enjoy the meal and the entire dining experience if instead it were infused with candlelight. When you eat at home, consider diffusing the light by turning on a nearby lamp, dimming your overhead light, or adding candles near the food in front of you.

Eat outside. If you have access to a park near your house, outdoor dining tables and chairs in the courtyard where you work, or a café that enables you to eat outdoors, take advantage of the opportunity to enjoy fresh air and beautiful surroundings—weather permitting, of course! And there's another benefit: you can get a little exercise while walking to your favorite outdoor eating place.

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.