

Mindful Eating Program

Executive Summary

Rationale for the program

Halebee's mindful eating program is designed to help pre-diabetic and diabetic clients improve their health by learning to incorporate mindful eating practices into their daily routine. Mindful eating was developed out of the Zen Buddhist practice of mindfulness, where one focuses on being embodied and fully present in a moment. Loss-of-control-eating may be most salient factor in overeating when hungry (Annameier et al., 2018) and mindful eating practices seek to attenuate that. Mindfulness interventions can increase restrained eating behaviors and reduce emotional eating (Tak et al., 2015) A randomized, controlled study of a mindfulness-for-stress-eating program showed participants benefited from a significant reduction in cortisol awakening response and maintained body weight (Daubenmier et al., 2011). Mindful eating practices are an easy and effective way for people to slow down their eating and listen to their body during meals.

Making healthy food choices and behavior modification can be challenging for those with type 2 Diabetes Mellitus(T2DM). Depression can be induced by the realities of living with a chronic illness, negative side effects of medication, general poor health, and required dietary change (Semenkovich, Brown, Svrakic, & Lustman, 2015). Pain from diabetic neuropathy is often accompanied by depression, which can compound the experience for those living with T2DM. Recent studies of mindful eating have shown it may be effective in helping people adapt their eating habits, lose weight, and lower their fasting blood glucosen (Miller et al. 2014; Olsen & Emery 2015). This program is designed as a way to help clients develop a new, non-judgmental relationship with food.

Description of the program

Our month-long mindful eating program will consist of fully remote, 90-minute group sessions conducted weekly over Zoom. During our supportive group sessions (8 people maximum enrollment), we will dive into concepts and philosophies of mindful eating with diabetes. Each week clients will also receive handouts to help them practice the mindful eating techniques at home or on the go. At the end of this program, clients can anticipate the following outcomes:

- 1) A reduction of cortisol (the stress hormone linked to belly fat)
- 2) Weight maintenance or a modest loss
- 3) Reduced fasting blood glucose level

Week 1: Introduction to Mindful Eating

During the first week of the program, we will introduce the topic of mindful eating, its history in practice, and discuss some of research that has been published on its efficacy related to diabetes. The class will step through the BASICS of mindful eating and some mindful eating practices that can be practiced at home.



Week 2: What is Hunger?

The second week of the program we will learn about the 9 types of hunger and delve into the art of listening to our bodies. We'll discuss how blood sugar homeostasis effects our feelings of cellular hunger.

Week 3: Getting to Know You

The core of week 3 is reflecting on our family histories and their effect on our personal patterns and eating behavior. We dig into the topics of stress eating and emotional eating. We will practice some exercises to help us understand our eating behavior.

Week 4: Putting It All Together

As we wrap up our final week of the program, we'll discuss topics related to developing a healthier relationship with food. Our activities will touch on the practicalities of making room for mindful eating in our busy lives.

Four Week Program Guide

Week 1: Introduction to Mindful Eating

MEQ	<input type="checkbox"/> Taken	<input type="checkbox"/> Scored	
Personal biometrics recorded	<input type="checkbox"/> Weight	<input type="checkbox"/> BMI	<input type="checkbox"/> HbA1c
Practice: BASICS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice: Food appreciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Week 2: What is Hunger?

9 Kinds of Hunger			
Exercise: Hypoglycemia and cellular hunger			
Practice: Mind hunger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice: Who is hungry in there?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Week 3: Getting to Know You

Favorite family foods			
Exercise: Conditioning around eating			
Exercise: Becoming aware	<input type="checkbox"/> Cravings	<input type="checkbox"/> Anxieties	<input type="checkbox"/> Fears
Practice: How am I feeling?			

Week 4: Putting It All Together

A healthier relationship with food			
Exercise: Satisfying heart hunger			
Practice: Taking in the right amount	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
practice: Looking deeply at our food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Summary

Halebee's 4-week Mindful Eating program will introduce you to the practice of mindful eating. Over the course the month you will non-judgmentally reflect on your own eating habits,



complete exercises to help you deeply get in touch with your mind and body, and practise mindful eating techniques.

References

- Annameier, S. K., Kelly, N. R., Courville, A. B., Tanofsky-Kraff, M., Yanovski, J. A., & Shomaker, L. B. (2018). Mindfulness and laboratory eating behavior in adolescent girls at risk for type 2 diabetes. *Appetite*, 125, 48–56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2018.01.030>
- Daubenmier J, Kristeller, J., Hecht, F. M., Maninger, N., Kuwata, M., Jhaveri, K., Lustig, R. H., Kemeny, M., Karan, L., & Epel, E. (2011). Mindfulness Intervention for Stress Eating to Reduce Cortisol and Abdominal Fat among Overweight and Obese Women: An Exploratory Randomized Controlled Study. *Journal of Obesity*, 2011, 651936. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2011/>
- Miller, C.K., Kristeller, J.L., Headings, A., & Nagaraja, H. (2014) Comparison of a Mindful Eating Intervention Among Adults With Type 2 Diabetes: a randomized control trial. *Health Educ Behav*. 41(2): 145–154. doi:10.1177/1090198113493092
- Olson KL, Emery CF. (2015) Mindfulness and weight loss: a systematic review. *Psychosom Med* 77:59–67
- Tak,S.R., Hendrieck, C., Nefs, G., Nyklíček, I., Speight, J., & Pouwer, F. (2015) The association between types of eating behaviour and dispositional mindfulness in adults with diabetes. *Appetite*, 87: 288-295.

Taking in The Right Amount

This mindful eating exercise is designed to help you slow down and make decisions about how much you should eat in a particular meal. It is something that can be done especially when you are out to eat and the portion sizes are much larger. It is also a great exercise that you can practice at a table full of others.

This practice begins when the food is served. Try to envision two-thirds of the plate to help you determine the right amount.

Before you begin, stop and take a look at the food you are eating and assess how much you would need to take to be two-thirds full. As you take a smaller portion and eat it mindfully, reflect, "I am eating this portion for the good health of my mind and body."

Take at least 20 minutes to eat. When you feel two-thirds full, drink some liquid.

Now assess the nine hungers, especially stomach hunger, cellular hunger, and mind hunger. Are they satisfied or not? If one part wants more to eat, why does it want it?

If you take second helpings, reflect, "I am eating this portion for _____." See if and how the mind fills the blank.¹

If you are at a restaurant, you can also ask for a to-go box when the meal is served and remove the appropriate amount before digging in!



¹ Adapted from Bays, J.C. (2017) *Mindful Eating*. Shambala, Boulder, CO. page 113