

# Using Mindful Eating in Your Practice

Two Activities to Help Your Clients  
Discover Mindful Eating

# Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this webinar, the learner will be able to:

- Define mindful eating
- State two principles of mindful eating
- List the six phases of the meal
- Introduce two mindful eating activities in a counseling session
- Review and discuss two mindful eating activities with clients

# What is Mindful Eating?

- Eating with awareness
- Being present for each sensation of the experience of eating.
- Awareness of the chewing, tasting and swallowing of food, moment by moment.

# Why Mindful Eating?

Mindful Eating is power:

- Power to make you a more effective counselor
- Power for your client to unlock his or her potential for change

# Mindful Eating Is About the Present

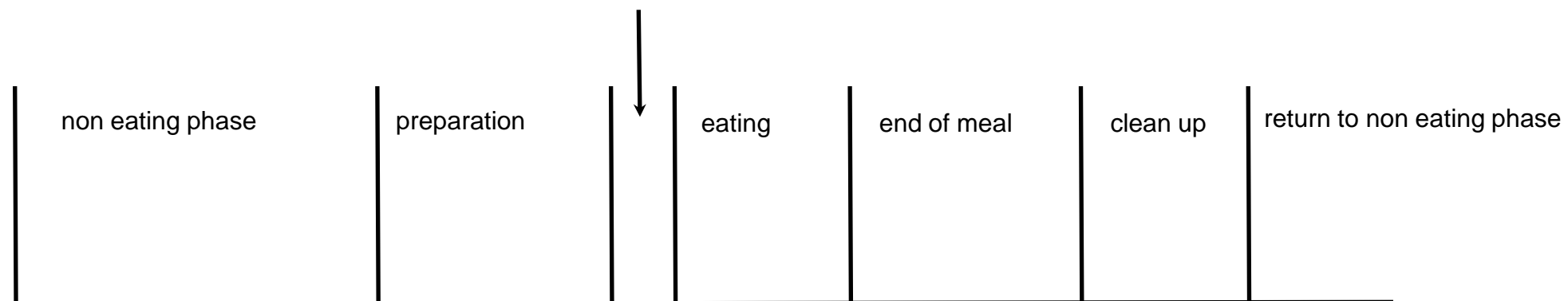
- The purpose of Mindful Eating is to keep the client in the present
- The intent is to help integrate learning by bring the client's experience back to the present moment where change can happen
- Helping the client appreciate the difference between the present and the future is key to facilitating change

# The Six Phases of the Meal

## 6-phases of eating

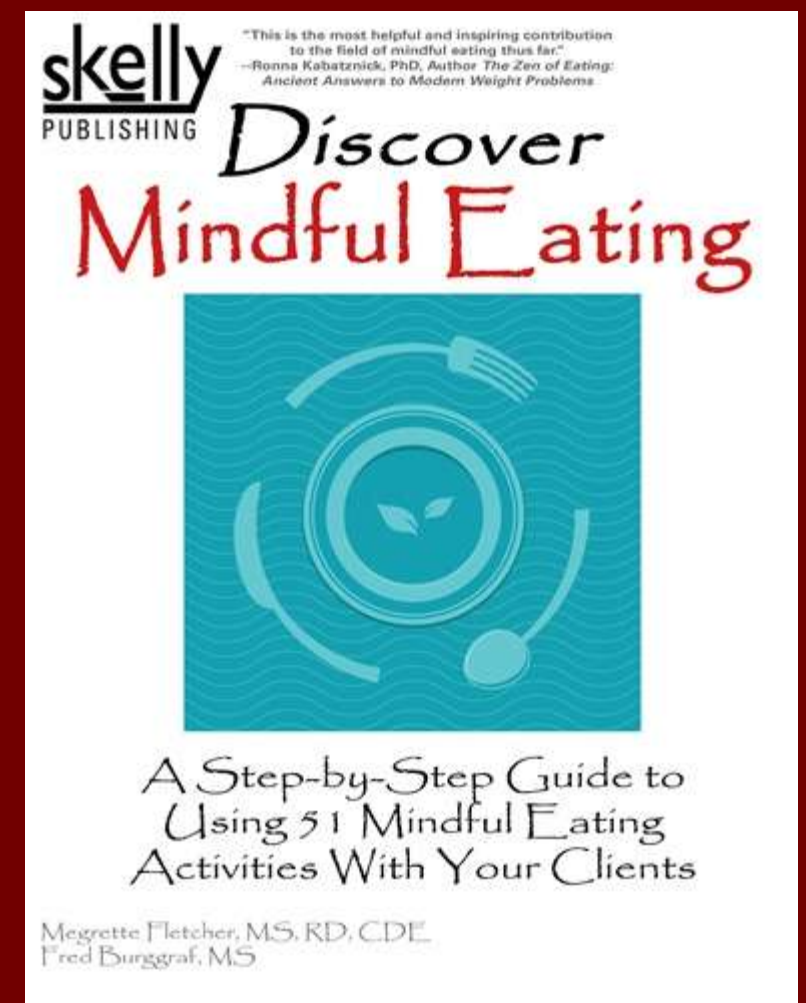
By Megrette Fletcher

Pause before eating



# Using Mindful Eating with Your Clients

- 2 activities you can begin using with your clients
- Both from *Discover Mindful Eating*—a collection of 51 mindful eating handouts and activities (35 CPEs)



Activity 1:

# Two-Plate Approach



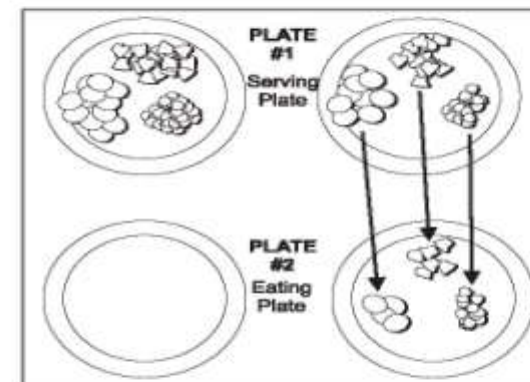
# Two-Plate Approach: Handout

*Discover Mindful Eating*

## Portions: Two-Plate Approach

The Two-Plate Approach is great to use in many places, especially in restaurants, where you don't have control over how much food is on the plate to begin with. You can also use this method with salads, especially when they are served in bowls or on plates that are far too small for eating the salad comfortably.

This method creates a boundary by using two plates instead of one. The space between the two plates is the boundary you want to approach with great care.



1. Start with a plate of food. Before you cut the food up, set your plate back away from you on the table and get another plate. This second plate can be the same size as the first plate, but it's even better if it's a smaller plate. Your original plate (the one with all the food on it) is now your Serving Plate, and the new plate is your Eating Plate.
2. From your serving plate, take some of each food and place it on your Eating Plate. Just how much to take you'll have to decide, but trust yourself to put a portion on the plate that makes sense.
3. Cut up the food on your Eating Plate into bite-sized pieces.
4. Eat all the food on your Eating Plate—slowly, mindfully and thoughtfully.
5. When you're done with all the food on the Eating plate, Stop. Evaluate. Ask yourself: do I need more? Do I really need more? If not, you're done. If you do need more, go on to the next step.
6. Bring half the food from the Serving Plate onto your Eating Plate. Cut this food up and eat it.
7. Again, stop and evaluate. The idea here is to make deliberate decisions at stopping points during the meal, frequently evaluating if you need more food. How often will you cross the boundary between the two plates? How much food is really enough?
8. If you need more food, repeat steps 6 and 7.

Try the Two Plate strategy at buffets. Put food on one plate and carry an extra plate back to the table with you. You may be amazed how long the food lasts from that first trip to the buffet.

# Two-Plate Approach: How to Introduce It

- Description: Using two plates to create a physical boundary may increase mindfulness of the amount eating during a meal or when dining out.

# Comments to Consider

This handout:

- Uses boundaries to help the client notice the feeling of satiation.
- Uses physical and portion boundaries. The mindful eating element here--step 5 of the procedure--is the intentional reflection on internal cues.
- Is more effective for clients who want concrete techniques to identify internal food cues
- might be especially effective with clients who have distinct weight loss goals.

**\*\*Establish that the client has the desire to create food boundaries before suggestion this handout\*\***

# Talking Points

- “I’d like to offer you a suggestion when you are at a buffet, restaurant or a party...”
- “Would you feel comfortable...?”

# Role Play

- Lets take a minute and try using this handout.

# Two-Plate Approach: Other Complementary Handouts

- The plate method -- visual
- The 50/80 Rule handout in *Discover Mindful Eating*
- Suggest creating 'white space' in the plate.

# Two-Plate Approach: Question & Answer

Activity 2:

# Basic Mindfulness Bite



# Basic Mindfulness Bite: Handout

*Discover Mindful Eating*

## **The Basic Mindfulness Bite**

The simplest technique of mindful eating is the Basic Mindfulness Bite. You can use this technique with any solid food.

1. As you bring food to your mouth, slow down and become aware of your movements.
2. Once the food is in your mouth, clear your hands. Put silverware or remaining food down.
3. Chew this bite with your mind in laser-sharp focus on the process. Concentrate on the taste of the food and the act of eating. Don't do anything else while you're chewing. Simply chew and pay attention.
4. Keep chewing until the food is uniformly smooth. Use this consistency of the food as a signal to swallow.
5. After you swallow, but before you bring more food to your mouth, rest for a few seconds, thereby inserting a pause into your eating.

No matter what other technique or strategy you may use with mindful eating, this Basic Mindfulness Bite can serve you as the best starting point.

## **Questions**

Try a small, snack-sized bag of potato chips with this technique. What do you notice about your experience with potato chips as you mindfully eat through all of them in the bag?

Who around you might make this technique difficult? Is there anything you might do to enlist their help rather than see them as making it difficult?

What do you notice about the pace of your eating when you eat this way?

What do you notice about your enjoyment of food when you eat this way?

# Basic Mindfulness Bite: How to Introduce It

- This handout offers a five-step technique to introduce mindfulness during each bite.

# Comments to Consider

- Client might find it strange to focus on a single bite. Yet every meal starts with a single bite. All eating problems are composed of many, many unmindful bites.
- Handout uses potato chips but any food could be used: Jax, cheese-puffs, mini rice cakes, popcorn, M&M's, crackers, raisins, grapes or carrots.

# Talking Points to Use with the Client

- Review handout questions first.
- Ask permission to shift focus from What is eaten, to How it is eaten.
- “Would you be willing to complete an eating exercise...?”

# Role Play

- Lets take a minute and try using this handout.

# Role Play

- The purpose here is to explore how food is eaten.
- There isn't a right or wrong way to do this.
- There are simply situations, choices & options to observe.
- Awareness opens choice -- help the client start to identify choices (portion size, rate of eating, taste, color, etc.)

# Basic Mindfulness Bite: Other Complementary Handouts

- Finding your Bite Size
- STOP for Mindfulness
- TCME.org has starting a mindful eating practice.

# Basic Mindfulness Bite: Question & Answer



# For Your Continued Learning

- Consider practicing these activities on yourself!
- Review handouts from TCME.org website:
  - “Creating a Mindful Eating Practice”
  - “Benefits of Mindful Eating”
- Skelly Publishing ([www.skellypublishing.com](http://www.skellypublishing.com)):
  - *Discover Mindful Eating* (35 CPEs)
  - *Mindful Eating Webinar Series* (8 CPEs)
  - *Mindless Eating* (14 CPEs)
- Free mindful eating counseling tips at [www.resourcesformindfuleating.com](http://www.resourcesformindfuleating.com)
- Blog posts available at [www.diabetesandmindfuleating.com](http://www.diabetesandmindfuleating.com)

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