**Mindful Eating: The Effect on Eating Disorders**

When someone has an eating disorder, it can be hard to find a way to eat in a healthy way that does not trigger eating problems. However, when it comes to mindful eating, studies show that it is a way to combat eating disorders.

Mindful eating is essentially learning how to pay attention when you eat, so that you can become more in tune with your body’s signals of fullness by becoming aware of all the senses you use when you are eating or planning to eat. Because of this, mindful eating is not focused on good food or bad food, or a right or wrong way to eat. The focus is on simply being aware of your actions as you are doing them.

In addition, mindful eating helps anyone with eating disorders focus on the following:

**Real Hunger Signals**

The body has about seven types of hunger signals it sends to your mind. Which ones are real and what else are they trying to feed? Maybe you just need to spend more time with your mother over having half that apple pie.

**Listening to Your Body**

The body lies sometimes, so when you learn mindfulness you also learn how to properly interpret your body after years of ignoring its signals. It may take some time to get the signals right.

**Knowing Thirst versus Hunger**

You can learn how your body differentiates its signals between hunger and thirst by learning to be more mindful. It may take a few months of questioning and listening, but you will get there.

**Planning Meals to Avoid Over-Hunger**

As you get to know your body and when it’s really hungry, you can start planning your meal times to avoid being overly hungry. When the body is overly hungry, it’s hard to make wise choices.

**Taking Time with Each Meal**

Eating mindfully means that you learn to take your time and enjoy each meal that you have. People with eating disorders tend to have a lot of stress around eating and taking time over eating can help remove that problem.

**Getting a Handle on Emotions**

When you realize that your craving for apple pie has more to do with wanting to be with your granny again than eating pie, you’ll be able to choose your food more wisely. You will also be able to enjoy some really good apple pie that you make based on your granny’s recipe over that crappy frozen pie you tried as a substitute for your emotions.

**Taking Care of Your Overall Body**

Being mindful is about so much more than just eating. You’re going to learn how mindfulness can help you overcome an eating disorder but also how you can do better in life in general.

All these lessons are good for anyone, but they are especially helpful for anyone who has experienced any type of eating disorder. When you eat with intention and are paying close attention to everything about your meals, instead of giving it only passing attention (risking over-hunger or eating from boredom), you can end up a normal healthy weight no matter where you started.