**Mindful Eating: Things to Avoid at Mealtime**

If you want to be more mindful when you eat, there are a few things you should avoid having around to ensure that you really can eat mindfully. Now keep in mind, especially if you have a family, that no mealtime will be uninterrupted. Having said that, you can try to make the experience more enjoyable by making it an important enough event in your life to avoid certain things that make eating mindfully impossible.

**Electronics**

Unless you have a real reason to have them on such as waiting for an emergency call, all electronics should be off during mealtimes. This is especially true when you’re enjoying meals with other people.

**Screens**

During mealtime, the TV should not be on either. You don’t need to watch the news, or movies, or anything during a good meal. Instead, focus on how good the food smells, looks, and tastes and be thankful about the nutrition you’re ingesting.

**Calls**

Mealtime lasts at the most 45 minutes for most people. Like electronics in general, if you’re not waiting on an important call for a child or work, you can turn ringers off for the duration of the meal. You cannot do anything about anyone else during that time most of the time anyway.

**Large Portions**

You can always go back for seconds, but start with small portions of your favorite foods you’re eating that meal. You may still be hungry, but you can always get more food. No need to get large portions when you can take your time and get more when needed.

**Clean Plates**

No matter what your momma or granny taught you, you do not need to clean your plate. Eating that food will not feed any starving children anywhere in the world anyway, so that is not a good way to get anyone to eat food. Eat until you’re satiated and no more.

**Stress**

If you have had a stressful day, consider taking a few minutes to meditate before you sit down to eat. Eating food when you are under emotional stress is not a good thing to do. Sometimes putting off the meal for a bit is a better choice.

**Standing**

Don’t eat while you’re standing up because that is not going to be a good way to focus on the food you’re eating. You’ll be focused on getting it down as fast as possible if you are standing. Sit down and take your time.

**Eating Quickly**

Each meal should take a minimum of 20 minutes to eat. If it’s a larger meal, it should take longer. Focus on chewing each bite of food fully before swallowing. Enjoy the taste, the smells, and the textures. Put your fork down between bites. Enjoy it.

**Bad Food**

It’s tempting to run through that drive through when you’re busy, but it’s not the best choice. It’s not even good food. You’re better off making your own hamburger or "fast food" at home to avoid all the chemicals that contribute to cravings.

While no one can eat every single meal avoiding everything mentioned, the point is to give it a try. Try eating a good meal when eating that good meal is your only focus. It’s amazing how good a basic roasted potato can taste when you’re not focused on what happens next on The Real Housewives of Hollywood or worse, The Nightly News.