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5 Ways to Start Attracting Your Ideal Weight

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2. Top Diet Foods



Most of us forget that we are made of two main parts - mind and body, but they are interlinked together to make up the whole. People who struggle with weight tend to listen to their minds more than their bodies and have some of the following thoughts:

- "I shouldn't eat that, I'll gain weight."
- "If I start eating this now, I won't be able to stop."
- "I'll never be thin, so I'll just eat what I want."

This incessant mind chatter keeps you disconnected from your body that you're not aware of any internal symptoms or paying any attention to satiety signals. If you listen to these thoughts and keep focusing on them, you'll always struggle with weight. Any healthy weight-maintainer will tell you that changing your thoughts is the most difficult part. How

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weight-maintainers and naturally slender people, I have learned that the following five behaviors will help you get started on your journey to attracting your ideal weight:

1. Sit down to eat

This act alone creates a better relationship with food. Eating is a behavior, and when sitting down to eat your food, you're being present and fully conscious of this behavior. If you stand and eat, you'll tend to be restless or you'll go do something else and return to your plate. In the end, you won't enjoy the eating experience and you'll want to eat more.

2. Rate your hunger

Do you know when you're hungry and when you're full? Babies are very smart when it comes to feeding—they cry when they're hungry, and if you force-feed them, they refuse to open their mouths. As they grow into young children, they understand language and form their own meanings. And unfortunately, they forget to listen to their body signals and instead listen to parents' and grandparents' instruction on how they should eat. There are no "shoulds" when it comes to hunger rating. Teach your body to recognize hunger and satiety signals so you can feed it just the right amount of calories at the right time. What's hunger? Hunger is when you feel a pang in your stomach and receive a message from the brain that you need to eat. You may also feel irritable, lightheaded, less alert and low in energy. In my seminars, I show people how to use the following Hunger Meter to recognize these signals instead of overeating or starving themselves, both of which can lead to weight issues:

Feeling	Meter Reading	Action/Consequence
Starving, too hungry to eat anything	1	eventually overeat
Slightly to moderately hungry	2	eat
Satisfied, hunger feeling gone	3	stop eating now
Full, stomach pushing on ribs	4	ate slightly more
Stuffed, stomach pain	5	overate, not happy

Eating food gives you energy, and it can be enjoyable and pleasurable, but when we overeat at 1 or 5, it causes us pain instead. Naturally thin people and weight-maintainers have learned how to eat when the body's

3. Eliminate distractions

With an increase in the use of technological devices such as smart phones and tablets, most of us have moved away from giving our food attention or listening to our body, because we're multitasking. Whether it's tweeting, sharing, texting or messaging, you're taking your concentration away from mindful eating. Similarly, driving and eating or watching TV when eating creates distraction and keeps you from noticing your food and enjoying it. When that happens, your mind will say, "I didn't see you eat all that." Because your body is connected to your mind, your body will feel as if it didn't have enough, leaving you wanting more. But when mind and body are connected in the act of eating, your body will derive pleasure from the eating experience. Create the rule for yourself that you'll stay away from technological devices (unless you're on call) while eating a meal.

4. Focus on the pleasure

Pleasure is a feeling and is created when you're fully engaged—mind, body, soul—in a certain activity. Eating your food consciously and when hungry (meter reading 2) creates pleasure for your whole system. Mindful eating means taking the time to enjoy your food—its taste, smell and texture and how it makes you feel in the moment. Weight-maintainers say that when they're hungry, eat what they want and eat mindfully, they tend to eat less than they used to. In addition, they don't feel deprived or suffer from crazy cravings. And they continue doing something pleasurable and interesting after eating so that their mind is off of food. They may read a novel, go for a walk, watch a movie, play a board game or do a puzzle with the kids, play a musical instrument or engage in a hobby.

5. Notice your symptoms

When you rate your hunger, sit while eating and eliminate distractions, you'll start recognizing internal symptoms. Like a scientist, become curious about your body and start experimenting with food. Notice and remember how a certain meal or food makes you feel right after eating and two hours later. Keep track of which foods make you feel light and energized and which ones make you feel heavy, slow or tired.



*Zaheen Nanji is a resilience champion and teaches people how to embrace change and bounce back. She is also the author of an award-winning book, *Attract Your Ideal Weight - 8 Secrets of People Who Lose Weight and Keep it Off*. She can be reached at*

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