

Top 5 Tips for Eating with Awareness

“We are indeed much more than what we eat, but what we eat can nevertheless be much more than what we are.” – Adelle Davis

Taking time for the eating experience can help us to reduce cravings, control our portion sizes, and enhance our interconnectedness with the flow of people, animals, and nature that contributed to the food to our plate. Here are some tips to enhance your eating experience to make it more deep and healing:

1. ***Eat in a setting where you feel relaxed.*** If you are eating in the car, in front of a computer doing work, or on the phone, you are not able to give full attention to eating, and, as a result, you may tend to eat more or eat foods that are not healing. If you are feeling emotional and are tending towards eating, see if you can first acknowledge and express your emotions rather than eating them. These practices will all help with the digestive process – helping you to get the most out of food.
2. ***Eat a palette of colors.*** Many people eat a “brown, yellow, and white diet”. Instead of lackluster, bland eating, try to sample all the colors of food, including red, orange, yellow, green, and purple, to ensure that you get enough of the important phytochemicals that have health benefits.
 - a. **Red:** Red apples, beets, red cabbage, cherries, cranberries, pink grapefruit, red grapes, red peppers, pomegranates, red potatoes, radishes, raspberries, rhubarb, strawberries, tomatoes, watermelon
 - b. **Orange:** Apricots, butternut squash, cantaloupe, carrots, mangoes, nectarines, oranges, papayas, peaches, persimmons, pumpkin, tangerines
 - c. **Yellow-Green:** Green apples, artichokes, asparagus, avocados, green beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, green cabbage, cucumbers, green grapes, honeydew melon, kiwi, lettuce, lemons, limes, green onions, peas, green pepper, spinach, zucchini
 - d. **Blue-Purple:** Purple kale, purple cabbage, purple potatoes, eggplant, purple grapes, blueberries, blackberries, boysenberries, marionberries, raisins, figs, plums
3. ***Eat with others.*** Eating is a communal event, a social occasion. The act of sharing food with others can be enriching for everyone involved and may help you with focusing on the people than on the amount of food eaten.
4. ***Sample a variety of flavors.*** When we don’t eat all of the variety of flavors at a meal – salty, sweet, bitter, pungent, and savory – we may come away from the meal feeling like we are “missing something,” and ultimately, food cravings can result. By getting small amounts of all the flavors of food, a practice common in other cultures such as in Asia, we may feel more fulfilled and desire less food after a meal.
5. ***Chew thoroughly.*** The process of digestion begins in the mouth where enzymes are secreted in saliva to break down food. If we do not properly chew and make our food morsels smaller, we may be subject to indigestion and other digestive problems. The act of eating allows us to be mindful, and in the moment, of our exchange of energy with foods.