



**Emotional Eating vs.
Mindful Eating**

Emotional Eating: What is it?

Eating for reasons other than hunger to “feed” a feeling

- Boredom, frustration, sadness, stress, happiness, etc.

Eating when you are not physically hungry to fill an emotional void

Emotional Eating: Why do we do it?

- **Food tastes good**
- **It can have a calming effect**
- **Coping mechanism that provides a distraction from what is really going on**
- **Consequences**
 - Overeating
 - Feelings of guilt, shame or failure
 - Negative self-esteem
- **Emotional eating is not inherently bad and is OK in moderation**
 - Avoid making it a habit
 - Replace it with mindful eating

Mindful Eating

- Being aware of physical hunger and fullness cues
- Being present at meals, avoiding distractions
- Starting with small portions
- Slowing down and savoring food
 - Taking small bites
 - Chewing food well
- Paying attention to food
 - Taste
 - Texture
 - Smell
 - How food makes you feel

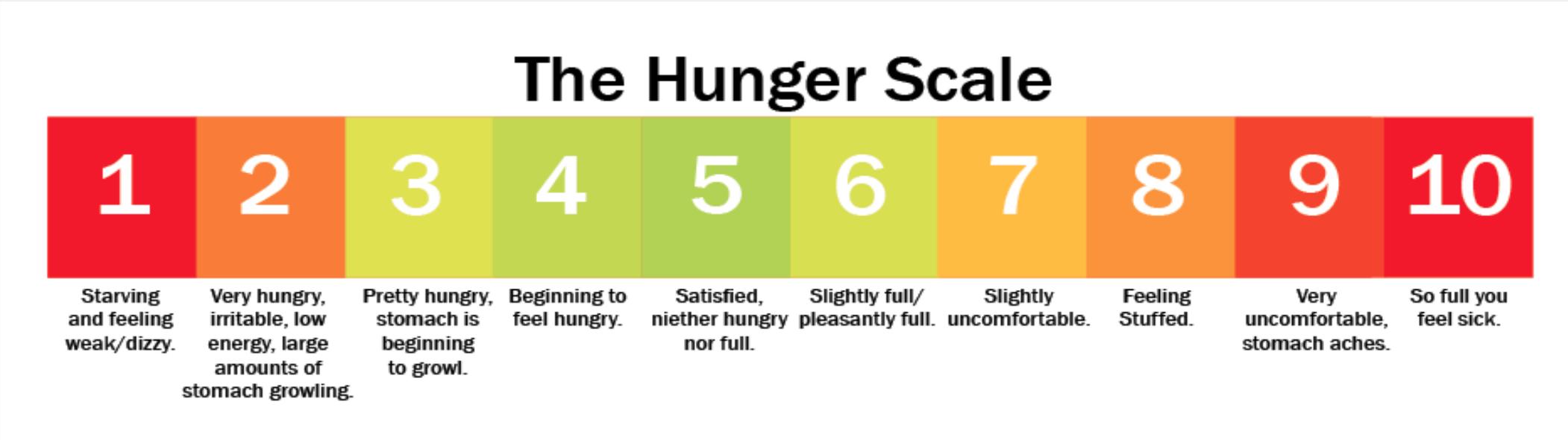


Mindful Eating: Putting Into Practice

- Notice and acknowledge that you are eating emotionally
- Try asking yourself questions:
 - Why do I want to eat?
 - Am I really hungry or am I bored/stressed/sad?
 - What do I want to eat right now?
 - How will I feel after I eat this?

Mindful Eating: Putting Into Practice

- **Rate your hunger using a hunger scale**
 - Try checking in with yourself before, during and after a meal using a scale from 1-10



Mindful Eating Exercise

- Take a snack (Ex: raisin, grape, strawberry, piece of chocolate or cheese)
 - Notice the appearance and texture of the food
 - How does it smell?
- Place a small amount of the food in your mouth without chewing it
 - After 30 seconds or so, start chewing slowly
- Afterwards, ask yourself:
 - What did you notice about the texture or flavor before/after you started chewing?
 - How did this experience compare to your typical eating experience?

Mindful Eating Benefits

Mindful eating may lead to:

- Eating less
- Decreased emotional eating
- Enjoying your food more
- Reconnecting to your body's hunger and fullness cues
- A healthier relationship with food
- Increased self-confidence
- Increased diet quality



Mindful Eating Goals

- Eat without distractions during 3 meals this week
- Take snacks out of the package
- Set your fork down between bites during 4 meals this week
- Check-in at meals using the hunger scale during 1 meal per day
- Practice the mindful eating exercise with a snack this week

Tips to Prevent Mindless Eating

- Eat on smaller plates
- Plan meals and snacks in advance
- Buy single-serve sizes or portion out your snacks
- Order smaller portions when eating out
- Have healthier options available

Healthy Snacking

- **Mindful snacking between meals can help control cravings and promote portion control**
- **Keep serving size in mind**
- **Aim to include at least two food groups per snack**
 - Lean protein
 - Vegetable
 - Fruit
 - Grain
 - Healthy fat

Healthy Snacking Examples

- Apple slices and nut butter
- Low-fat cheese and fruit
- Whole-wheat crackers and tuna
- Half of a sandwich
- Greek yogurt or cottage cheese and fruit
- Veggies and hummus
- Toast and nut butter
- Boiled egg and toast
- Make your own trail mix with dried fruit, nuts, seeds, chocolate chips, etc.



Other Positive Coping Mechanisms

- **Physical activity**
 - Stretching
 - Walking
 - Jogging
 - Riding a bike
- **Reading**
- **Getting outdoors**
- **Listening to music**
- **Talking with friends and family**



Questions?

Thank You!