

Mindfulness key to eating what you want while preventing overeating

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In her new book, Lynn Rossy says that you can eat whatever you want to maintain health and prevent overeating, as long as you eat mindfully. Credit: University of Missouri-Columbia

Americans spend more than 60 billion dollars a year on weight loss products; two-thirds of these dieters are estimated to regain more weight within four or five years than they originally lost according to the Live Strong Foundation. A new book from a University of Missouri researcher provides an innovative and effective program to help people adopt healthy eating habits by mindfully listening to their body's needs,

without giving up food.

"You can eat anything you want, as long as you do it mindfully," said Lynn Rossy, a health psychologist for the Total Rewards Program at the University of Missouri system. "Mindful eating means choosing [food](#) that will satisfy you and nourish your body as well as being aware of physical hunger and satiety cues. Food should be pleasurable to your taste buds and to your body. Rather than depending on a prescribed or fad diet, the mindfulness-based eating solution teaches people how to use their own internal signals to guide how, when, what and why they eat."

Rossy's book, "The Mindfulness-Based Eating Solution: Proven Strategies to End Overeating, Satisfy Your Hunger, and Savor Your Life," lays out the BASICS of mindful eating to help people slow down, savor each bite and actually eat less. For [mindful eating](#), people must first breathe and do a belly check to ensure they are eating when actually hungry. Next people should assess their food and decide if this is something they really want to eat. While eating, people should slow down and investigate their hunger throughout the meal, particularly at the half-way point. They also need to chew thoroughly to improve the eating experience and absorb the nutritional value of their food. Finally, and most importantly, people need to savor their food.

"Lynn Rossy's mindfulness-based eating program provides a straightforward path for fine tuning the fundamental relationship we have with food," said Jon Kabat-Zinn, the creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts.

Rossy suggests that the availability of fast, cheap and easy food has resulted in a convenience culture that is bad for our health. To combat this, Rossy offers manageable tips such as preparing one's kitchen with

basic ingredients that cook fast and easily to make healthy fast food at home. Being conscious in the kitchen allows people to eat food that fits their busy schedules, tastes good and is good for their bodies. To improve health, we need to re-think the kitchen and change the way we think about food, she says.

"Diets do not work in the long term because they do not help people access their own internal wisdom about how to [eat](#)," Rossy said. "Taking a mindful approach to eating also helps people discover desires that can be ignored through eating for emotional reasons—desires for creativity, movement, connection, meaningful work and spirituality."

"The Mindfulness-Based Eating Solution: Proven Strategies to End Overeating, Satisfy Your Hunger, and Savor Your Life," recently was published by New Harbinger Publications. Rossy is a licensed clinical psychologist at the University of Missouri's wellness program for faculty and staff. She developed Eat for Life, a mindfulness-based intuitive eating program. She serves as a board member for the Center for Mindful Eating.

Provided by University of Missouri-Columbia

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