

Welcome to "Using Mindfulness to Take Charge of Your Eating" . My name is Melanie Ordonez and I one of your moderators today. The other moderator is, Jeannie Kuehler. I'd like to welcome our guest speaker, Maureen Prinster . Maureen is a registered and licensed dietitian and a National Board certified health and wellness coach. She has more than 15 years of experience coaching in the behavioral health field. Maureen has committed her career to helping individuals live happier, healthier and more productive lives by coaching them on being their best self. Welcome, Maureen .

Thank you, Melanie. Thank you so much. For inviting me to speak today. And I'm so excited to be here to share with all of you what I have learned working with clients for over 15 years in the health and wellness arena. And specifically when it comes to mindful eating. Also, thank you, all, for answering the question about why you are interested in this topic. That really gives me a good idea of where you're coming from and that helps us be able to hopefully interact today as well, to continue to do that. We will have other poll questions that you can answer. But I do feel honored to be able to share this information with you and I wanted to also say congratulations. You came to this webinar today to learn more about this topic but whether you realize it or not, you are also going to be doing some assessments, some exploration of your own eating behaviors and, so, hopefully we can help you create some self-awareness. And that self-awareness is really crucial to change behaviors, which a lot of you have talked about and in the reasons why you're here. Which, obviously, you want to ultimately improve your health and well-being. So, through increased consciousness, and better decision-making, hopefully you can alleviate the stress of feeling like things are outside of your control, especially when it comes to food. We are going to talk about strategies and ideas of how to create a more mindful eating experience and then hopefully how you can use those to your advantage. So, I would like to start by asking you and other poll question. And I want to find out about your eating experiences. Melanie will pull that over .

Yes. I have the poll question appear. What is your most memorable eating experience? In order to answer that, type your answer in the text box where it says, type your answer here. And then click on the icon to the right or hit enter on the keyboard. That will broadcast your answer to us. We are not broadcasting all these answers but I will read some of them for Maureen . I am seeing holiday is listed here. Christmas. Thanksgiving. Family gatherings. Dinners with best friends. Anniversaries. Lots of dinners with family. People that we love. Someone mentioned a buffet at the Atlantis resort in Dubai. That's pretty memorable. Someone else mentioned eating like a king on a Royal Caribbean cruise.

Yes, you can't forget that.

Sunday dinners.

These are great.

Lots of great answers.

Rates. Thank you, guys, for providing that information and really the reason I ask you that is really just to get you to think how you approach eating and what made these experiences memorable. And obviously from the answers we know that these memories are really because of some sort of intensity. During the experience. Whether it is the camaraderie with your family, being in a beautiful place. Maybe it is a taste. Something that blew you away from the taste standpoint. The intensity of feeling and emotion or even one of your senses. And if you cannot remember a memorable experience, that's okay. I think a lot of you do but some people, you know, they have a hard time coming up with that and that says something as well. That they possibly do do some mindless eating. I'm curious, I'm sure you all are like me. Have you ever looked down at a bag of chips you were eating and wondered, where did those chips go? And you don't really remember eating those chips but they are gone. You don't even remember what they tasted like. Or have you ever asked yourself, why did I choose the salad and not the super dinner? Or why did I eat the eggs and bacon instead of the pancakes? These are just examples of the mindless habits that go into eating. There are some people that estimate that we make 200 food related decisions per day and unaware, really, of 90% of them. We know these eating habits though can be easily changed and that's what we are going to be talking about. Being aware but also looking at your environment. We will talk today about some of the reasons why this happens to us and how we can create more mindfulness when it comes to eating and a more healthy way. Okay. So we are going to start into, what is mindful eating. What is it, anyway? Beautifully stated by a mindfulness expert, John Cabot Zen he said when we taste with attention even the most symbolist foods

provide a universe a sensory experience, awakening us to them. So, mindfulness in simple terms is it encourages us to live in the moment and so the theory goes that we are so busy trying to block out past worries and anticipate future ones, sometimes it's hard to concentrate on enjoying what we are doing at that precise moment and in this instance, eating. I don't know if a lot of you know about Buddhism but that is where this mindfulness comes from. Where the goal in Buddhism is to reach a state of enlightenment. And as we discussed, we will not of course focus on the Buddhism as a religion, our focus is more on a secular way to help us gain insight into our eating habits and improve our relationship with food. I found this so interesting. Zen Buddhist monks and nuns to each bite of food no less than 30 times in eat each meal in silence. So, if you think about it of course, it's difficult and it's really an effective to eat mindfully while also maintaining a conversation with someone. The additional chewing, for those monks and nuns, allows them to really savor the experience of eating. So, this concept of mindful eating is really paying close attention to every detail of the eating experience. And mindfulness is living with greater awareness of those moment to moment thoughts, feelings and actions. And really to create awareness of also the internal and external cues that are guiding your eating behavior. And those could be physical, emotional, even just words that come to our mind. They on a cognitive side of things. So, often we almost eat automatically, giving little thought to what or how much we are eating. Like the candy jar. Grab some. Your server large plate of food and you eat it all when you're really intended not to. Mindfulness can lead us to making more intentional choices and eating instead of responding to all these external cues and emotions. In the environment. Mindful eating isn't just about the eating itself but it's also about cooking and preparing her food in mindfulness as well. By becoming more mindful you can make your life better and more purposeful. And hopefully not even just acting on autopilot but becoming more engaged in your daily life and having a sense of greater control of eating. Around you to make deliberate decisions about eating instead of acting without thinking. I know that is kind of a long description of mindful eating but like I said at the beginning, in the basics, we are hoping to learn how to just be in the moment. So, now I want to talk more about the mindful eating cycle in a little bit more detail. And on this slide you see a graphic that was developed by Dr. Michelle May. She shows here that we all have these specific eating patterns picked a dominant eating cycle that we have developed. And it really has an important impact on your health, your satisfaction with the eating aspect of your life. Since we can only change the things we are aware of, we are going to discuss this cycle to help us become more aware and in charge of those hundreds of eating decisions that we make every day. The first part is why. Why do what you? Environmental? Social, emotional cues, those influence our food choices. Like was saying before. The size of your plate. There is one study that found that people end up serving about 22% more pasta on a 12 inch plate versus just a 10 inch plate. Which is not that big of a difference but that just shows you how that plays a part. And other influences like the availability of full. The candy dish on your desk or the food sitting on the counter. Even the size of how big the portion is of the person sitting next to you. That often has an effect. I want to do another poll before we get into more of the cycle. Besides just basic hunger, what usually prompts you to eat? Melanie is pulling over that pole.

I see we have a lot of stress and boredom.

Yes. And that leads us into our next part of the cycle but, yeah, a lot of times it isn't just about the hunger. Probably more than not. When you want to heed, thank you, everyone for your information. Research has demonstrated that normal weight individuals are more likely to eat in response to internal cues like hunger and in contrast, people that struggle with that tend to eat in response to other cues. That's not to say, we all do, we all eat for reasons other than hunger at certain points. But if we can create more of that awareness of how our body feels, that can lead into the mindfulness we are talking about. Because, hunger, is that primitive, yet of course, reliable method of regulating our intake and our awareness of hunger cues can be relearned. Think about a newborn baby. They have no concept of time. They don't have the environmental cues necessarily, that is killing them to eat for quite a while. And so, that obviously changes as we grow and we do sometimes relearned that. Pausing to ask the question, am I hungry, whenever we feel like eating can help us reestablish hunger as your primary Q4 eating. And it's a simple but powerful question and it's a process of discovery that helps us differentiate our fuel needs from our other needs. Those emotional, environmental. And once we can accurately identify that hunger, we can relearn it and fine-tune our awareness and gauge how hungry we are and make an intentional decision about how much to order or prepare or to serve.

All right. Next is, what do I eat? This examines the factors that we consider when choosing food such as convenience, taste, comfort and nutrition. Really examining, what do I eat in a typical day? What are my norms? Are there things that you are choosing because you are on maybe a certain diet or you are trying to

help with some health issues? What kind of beverages do you drink? Really looking at that piece of things. Which brings us to the next, how do I eat? In this I was talking a lot before about how often we eat quickly. While we are distracted by other activities such as watching TV or driving or working, on our phones. And that really sets us up for over eating. So, when we practice eating mindfully using this model, we learn to eat with more purpose and more awareness. And this often includes setting an intention for how full we want to be when we finish and devoting the necessary attention to eating, to notice the food and the effects on our bodies. Then we come to the next part of the cycle, how much do I eat? Which is a big part of why we are even talking about this. And in our modern full -- food abundance. This would everywhere but you don't have to go off your couch. Someone will bring it to you from a restaurant or from a grocery store. There is food everywhere. So, deciding how much food to eat has become a critical skill in we have had to learn that. Compared to when food had to be hunted and food had to be, there was a lot of work involved. And as you know, most weight loss programs use external control-based methods like measuring food are counting calories or counting points. And although these can help with weight loss, they, unfortunately, it make you feel disconnected sometimes from your internal signal. So, through mindfulness training we can learn to determine the appropriate amount to eat by paying attention to those internal cues and really clarifying how we want to feel. And then finally, where does the energy go? Where do you invest this energy that is produced from the food you choose to eat? Thinking about that. The food you eat provides you with energy, nutrients to live and to breathe, to work, exercise. But, when you eat more than you need, that excess fuel will be stored to use for fuel later. And, so, really, again, just kind of thinking about that in determining, when I ingest this food, what energy am I going to be using it for? Something you may not have ever really thought about before. Next slide please.

So, what actual effect does mindful eating have on our bodies, anyway? Does it really make a difference? I first want to talk about how it affects our digestive system. Distraction actually can act much like stress on the body, especially when it comes to our digestive system. If you are distracted by your phone, by television or driving, your body can't differentiate between that and what stress will do. So, when we are distracted during eating, our brains really read this as extra stimuli. And the bottom line is if you are eating while overloaded with stimuli, it's taking that it's stress and your body doesn't know that it's supposed to be digesting. So as you dash out the door in the morning, your toast is in your hand or your eating lunch in front of your computer screen are anxiously worrying about the day or you are upset because you got in an argument with your spouse, the message you are giving your body is don't digest. We need that energy for survival. And to your body, the stimuli, while not as dramatic or intense as, say, being chased by a saber tooth tiger, it's still telling you, telling your body, emergency. Emergency. So what happens is you've been coming you can experience digestive symptoms such as heartburn or a feeling of food sitting in your stomach, bloated or even stomach pain. And amazingly, the nutritional value of even the healthiest meal is diminished when this is going on because the digestive system is not functioning at its optimal level. And is able to absorb those nutrients. Stress also, as we know, can inhibit concentration, memory and impact your planning and choices of the food that you are taking in. So when our minds are tuned out during mealtime, the digestive system maybe 30-40% less effective which is amazing. I did not know that it was that significant before I started really getting into mindful eating and understanding it. That's pretty amazing stuff. And, so, while the precise mechanisms of hunger and fullness are not completely understood, we do know that the brain and central nervous system receives signals from the body when food is desired or needed. These signals can be caused by many triggers. That includes a psychological state such as our mood and once eating is underway, the brain has a key role to send out a signal when fullness is approaching. But if your mind is multitasking during eating, critical signals that regulate food intake are not going to be received by the brain. And if the brain does not receive those messages, such as the sensation of taste or satisfaction, it may fail to register the events as eating. Then that will lead to the brain continuing to send out additional signals of hunger, increasing the risk of over eating. The good news is mindful heating can help with that and change that. Mindful eating also can help with weight loss, especially for those that struggle with over eating. Or eating out of boredom, like you all have shared. Some of you share before or your environment. Allowing you to be back in more tune with your body signal. I mean, practicing mindful eating is of course not a guarantee for weight loss. Unfortunately, nothing is 100%, but, it can hopefully help for you from consuming cycles of yo-yo dieting or weight cycling or body loathing that a lot of us have so you can fully invest in your well-being. And as you learn to eat with intention and attention, you will develop skills and tools you can apply to other areas of your life as well. And when you can feel more in control, this can build your confidence. Knowing you can eat and not feel guilt or shame that can come with over eating. Being just in the present in itself can improve things like anxiety, depression, irritability. So why not bring

this into your eating experience? Now I want to get into the strategies. What are the ways that you can develop this skill?

I work with clients that have had weight loss surgery. That's part of what I do and I been doing that for 15 years and this is one of the most important skills that they are taught to help maintain their weight. It's to slow things down. Slowing it down as one of the best ways that we can get our mind and body to communicate what we really need for our nutrition, essentially. I mean, the body actually sends its satiation signal about 20 minutes after the brain which is why we often unconsciously overeat. The last time you ate a meal and it took you over 20 minutes, you may have a hard time coming up with that. But if we slow down. If we give our bodies a chance to catch up with our brain, and hear the signals, we eat the right amount and I can make a big difference. I have another poll question for you. Melanie will pull that over.

Okay. What are some ways you can slow down eating and listen more deeply to your body's signals? I already have people responding. Talking about distractions. Turning off technology. That is a big one. Using a timer.

I like the CIP with water in between bites. Not working and eating. Putting down your utensils. These are great. Technology. Gosh. And the coaching I do, working with individuals on behavior change, that is a big one. Especially the last couple of years, how much it affects many areas of our life, not just eating.

People talking about eating in front the computer. And if you have an office job, that can be tough.

Absolutely. We are constantly multitasking. But just following like what our parents taught us and if you have children you've probably told your children to slow it down. It takes 20 minutes for your brain and your stomach and all of that. But some other things you can do. You can chew each bite multiple times. I have my clients for the weight loss surgery do 20, 20 times for each bite. That can really help. Setting your fork down between bites. That can make a big difference. And, again, limiting your distracted eating. Taking out the technology and the television and the computer out of the equation. In a few minutes, I am going to have your practice a version of a way to allow you to determine how your body feels during hunger and fullness and hopefully two years that information to determine what you want to feel like and how you want to eat. And while it would be wonderful to practice this throughout our entire day, the reality is we live in a fast and busy world. But, we can use this. We can use these insights from say a formal mindfulness practice, slowing down, listening to our bodies, doing one thing at a time, to bring more informal mindfulness then to our daily lives. You aren't going to be do it all the time. That's not realistic. But creating, like I was saying at the beginning, the awareness, is going to make a difference. To eat slower, consider this strategy as well. If you've ever tried this. Eat with your nondominant hand. Research actually indicates that even with your opposite hand can reduce how much you eat by 30% because you are just naturally going to have to slow down and be more attentive. With my weight loss surgery clients practicing that, the lifestyle that they need to maintain their weight loss, actually ask them to practice pausing in between each bite. And I encourage anyone that wants to lose weight, be more comfortable after they are eating, to pause. Set their utensil down for two or three minutes and see how that affects their feeling of fullness. And I tell you almost every single client I have, that I had do this, they say the same thing. Oh my gosh, I did not eat as much as I normally do. Or I was more full a lot faster than I normally was. It's pretty significant so I encourage you to try that sometime. Other strategies on the next slide. Some other ways to encourage mindful eating has to do with changing your environment. So, don't keep those unhealthy foods in reach. Make it harder to reach. Use plates or bowls that hold an appropriate serving size. And I'm sure we've all seen that. Whether we practice it or not, though, sometimes it's not possible. But if you can't have control -- can have control over your bowl or plate, do it. Don't eat in front of the TV where the commercials are likely to create cravings. The marketing these companies do is pretty amazing to where they can really get you to think about their food and buying and wanting their food. Pay attention to that. Another one that some people have laughed at me before but if it helps, use baby forks or spoons. You're going to be forced to take smaller bites which will keep you from eating large bites and feeling like you are wolfing your food down. Is just going to naturally slow you down. I don't know if you've ever heard of him, he is a big researcher for mindless eating but he has a lot of other information out there, but, Brian Wansink, most of us, he says, have too much chaos going on in our lives to consciously focus on every bite we eat and then ask ourselves if we are full. Like we were saying before. But the secret, he says come is to change your environment so it works for you rather than against you. Again, just having the snacks around or not around, the candy on your desk, that is going to only tempt you. So to really learn how to mindfully eat there's a lot of information out there. One of my favorites,

just so you know if you want to practice it on your own, there are some apps. Just to name a few, mindful bite, is one of them. And, am I hungry? Is another one. And Headspace. That is a popular app. They have a really good eating, mindfulness piece that will guide you through your meal. And the idea is to listen to one of these apps even before you cook. And then adapt your behavior accordingly by approaching food anymore focused way. Examining how it tastes. How does it move on your tongue. It sounds kind of overly holistic but with practice it can be pretty sensible. Especially if you do it occasionally. You don't have to do it all the time. But if you try it, if you don't try it, you don't know how it will affect the amount you eat and how you feel afterwards so I encourage you to try one of those apps if you are an app person.

Next I'm going to walk you through just a very short mindful eating exercise. And there are three parts to this. First, we are going to focus on what happens to our stomach when we eat and really imagine what that is like. Second, we will figure out how to determine when we are hungry and when we are full. Again these are very basic things but a lot of times we lose sight of it. And lastly I'm going to walk you through a hands-on practice session to scale your hunger. For this, please remove any distractions if you can. If your phone is out, turn it over or move it out of the way. And you are just going to focus on how your body feels. First, I want to make sure you have a good perspective of what happens to our stomach when we eat I want you to make a fist and take a good look at it. And place it below your breastbone, to the left. This is why your stomach is and this is the size of your stomach. And when you ingest food and beverages, your stomach expands much like a balloon filling with water. So if you think about that balloon and what's happening to it as it gets more full, if you overfill a balloon, we know what happens. And that will not happen to our stomach even though sometimes it will feel like it's bursting but I want you to take a few seconds to reflect on the physical and emotional sensations that happen to you when you overeat. Even if you just close your eyes and think about what that feels like. When you overeat. When you overfill that balloon in your body. Okay. Now that we have that. We are going to talk about how to determine your hunger level now that we have a good idea what overeating feels like very much like a gauge on a fuel tank, you can practice using a numbering system to help you determine your hunger. To explore that sense of emptiness, your sense of that just right feeling. What it feels like when you are a little too full or what we just did, the feeling of being stuffed. I like to use a numbering system for this. Zero is completely empty and 10 would be full. So full of gas, like a gas gauge the gas is lashing out and it's useless.. I want you to think about what that feels like for you. What does a zero feel like for you. What are your symptoms that you usually will experience?, Answers usually are headaches, irritability. Tired. Shaky. Nauseous NIS. When you are hungry. And then think about the other extreme. What does a 10 feel like? Nauseous. Bloated. Fatigued. Swollen. And even the emotions that are part of it. Feelings of guilt or shame. Being able to assess that, now I want you to practice doing this. Give you an idea of how you will scale your hunger before you eat. I want you to close your eyes and I want you to begin by taking some deep breaths to help you get relaxed and really in touch with your entire body. Closing your eyes will help you concentrate. Do that if you can. Inhale deeply holding your breath for a second. And then exhaling completely. And during this breathing, take notice of how your stomach feels. Now, breathe normally and focus on your stomach. Are there signs of hunger? Growling, ogling, emptiness? How hungry do you feel right now in this present moment on a scale of zero through 10. And what do you notice about your body that made you choose that number? Open your eyes and now become aware of your surroundings. And if you can, write down your current level of hunger on a piece of paper. But now I want you to think about, okay, this is where I'm at right now. But what level of hunger is indicative for you that it's time to eat? What do you want that to be? Do you want it to be a zero or would it rather be a three? In the other side of things. What number do you think you may want to stop eating? Probably don't want it to be a 10. Somewhere around the six, seven or eight range. For most of us. Really, just getting back in touch with that and feeling that again. Thank you for doing that. So we will go to the next slide.

And like we were saying before, this takes practice. Learning how to be mindful takes time and practice and I tell my clients all the time about any behavior change or habit they want to develop, we are looking for progress, not perfection. You will not do this all the time. You don't have the time. But, what is so awesome about it that even if you just do it a little bit of the time, it can empower you to make choices that are going to be more in line of what you want for yourself. What you want your health to be like. It really just increases that emotional, self-regulation. And, honestly, it usually leads to eating much less which can lead to some weight loss for some of us but also just being more grateful for the food we have and enjoying the eating experience. Possibly much more. And, so, people that are developing this skill and have been able to get really good at it, they are less likely to usually eat in response to emotions. Again, that doesn't mean they won't ever but they are less likely to do it. They actually have an increased preference for healthy foods and even a stronger preference for fruits over sweets which falls in the healthy foods category. I challenge all of

you to spend maybe the next week just nonjudgmentally observing your eating habits. Without any commentary. Without putting yourself down or saying anything about it, necessarily, to yourself but just noticing it and feeling it. And then maybe think about, too, how you think about food. How do you talk about food. What is your relationship like with it. Next slide please.

When we eat slower, chew our food more properly, we know that your body can actually digest food more effectively and you will have less discomfort. But since you are actually paying attention to your meal and the specifics of it, you will appreciate and enjoy eating that meal. And we know that reducing overeating is a big effect from mindful eating. And there are even studies that show that mindful eating can benefit those who suffer from eating disorders, specifically binge eating. It can't cure it of course, on its own, but there is a component of mindful eating that can really help along with usually psychotherapy and other treatments.. In my opinion, the improved feelings toward food, that improve relationship, it's really one of the most important effects that mindful eating can have. The weight loss is good if that can happen. Not being uncomfortable with that relationship. Because a lot of times we all have negative associations with food. For some people looking at, say, a piece of cake, brings up a feeling of guilt or shame or a feeling of aversion that we think, if I eat that cake, then I'm going to do something wrong or I'm going to be, I'm going to gain five pounds. Hopefully learning these skills can improve your relationship with food and allow you to enjoy the experiences more. Maybe have, having a small piece of cake and savoring it or even a couple of bites and being able to experience that taste and that texture and the effects from that that give us that feeling. And if any of you struggle with type II diabetes or if you know people that do, there are actual studies that show that mindful eating can help people improve their food choices, lose weight, lower their hemoglobin A1c by practicing more mindful eating. I want to close with this. Think about eating like a food critic. Somebody who goes to the restaurants and tries different foods and reports on them. Think about that. Again, not all the time, but really savoring and being in touch with what that experience is like. And you will be surprised at how it affects you and then how you feel.. One last poll question. I will have Melanie pull that over.

Okay. Here is the last poll question. What is one mindful eating technique you will commit to doing moving forward?

I love it. Smaller portions. Using a smaller plate. Chewing food longer. I'm telling you, it makes a difference. Turning off the distractions. Putting your fork down. This is great. And, you know, it's something that you can practice and improve on. Are you going to be perfect? No. But just creating that awareness, being in tune with what your body feels like. And what food does for you? What energy it produces, it can make a big difference. So, I appreciate all of your answers to all the poll questions. I appreciate you letting me speak with you today and provide you with this information that I have learned over the years working with individuals. I really enjoyed that. All right. That's it, Melanie , on my hand.

Great. And I want to share quickly some additional resources that you provided for us that people can get through the handout. If you download the handouts here, also I want to point out, if you click on the underlined, blue lettering, it will take you to the sites where these are. These are active links on your screen right now if you want to click on them and opened them and bookmark the sites. Feel free to do that. I'm going to leave that there for you for just a moment and, Maureen , thank you so much for sharing this really really useful information. I know mindful eating is not easy. What people don't know is that Maureen and I coach together. I was a coach for five years so I have respect for Maureen and she has gone on to become an expert in coaching and she's doing a wonderful job. I'm going to pull over here quickly our slide and then I will pull that resource slide back again. I just want you to know people like Maureen are here at your EAP to help you with this topic but if you are struggling with mindful eating are struggling with eating and you just need help to get on track, you have got benefits through your EAP. You can call us or get on the web and contact us 24 hours, seven days a week. You are not sure what your toll-free number is or your website, please reach out to your HR department. They will give you accurate information for your company to reach us. And, Maureen mentioned, there are times when mindfulness can work well on its own and there are other times where you need extra assistance people mentioned, I have trouble with binge eating. That's a problem for me. Sometimes it takes talking to a professional in person, face-to-face, to get some ideas about what's happening with that. Some of you can get that through your EAP. You can get telephone consultations and coaching calls. Also, there are numerous articles that are available for you on this topic or other topics on health and wellness. I encourage you to go out there and search and utilize all of your resources that you have. You know, I see commonly, Maureen , an advertisement for a particular company that offers a very similar service as to what you do in coaching. It talks about changing the way we think about eating and

being more mindful about eating and people may not even be aware that that is what is offered through the EAP. So I do want to make sure people know that is available and out there. Okay. I want to remind you if you're having trouble opening any of the links, go ahead and download the handout. You will be able to get them from the handout so, again, if you are having trouble getting the links to open for some reason, it could be your site on your computer that may not allow it and it's blocking you. Go ahead and download that handout. There to make handouts and if you download this you should be able to get those. So, Maureen, we do have a few questions here that I want to go over with you but first we have a comment that someone said and I think it's really so common. I heard people say something similar in different way so I want to read it to you. It says, what is hard for me is that I lie to myself by saying that I'm hungry but yet I really am not really hungry. So it's hard to change that mindset.

It is. And those situations, sometimes there is a reason to go and talk with your primary care doctor. Sometimes there are some medical issues going on but sometimes, again, we just have lost what is that real feeling of hunger? Is it a fear? There can be sometimes the fear of being hungry. And if that is what is in your mind and being aware of that and knowing that maybe that isn't, you know, a 100% rational fear because of, obviously, we have food everywhere. You know, it can make a difference to understand what's going on in our mind and what we are telling ourselves.

That's a really good point, Maureen. It's important to use all your resources and figure out if there is something else going on. Is there something that is causing this to happen? Is it that I just need to pay more attention or is there something else going on? That's a really good point. I have someone who says, what other areas of health does mindfulness in daily life show benefits? Doesn't have other areas where it can benefit us besides eating?

Absolutely. One of the things that we see a lot that can help is with anxiety. Like I was saying before, the fear that sometimes is in our minds that we know aren't 100% true. But other things like improving sleep, even pain in some instances. Mindfulness can actually reduce chronic pain. There is a lot of programs out there now for folks with chronic pain that focus on that mindfulness practice and being able to be more in tune with, okay, what can I do, what can I concentrate on, what can I control? And then stress too, of course which goes along the same lines as anxiety. To be able to talk yourself through, being able to be in the present and just be versus worrying about, okay, all this stuff will be happening or all the things I have to do or feeling overwhelmed. Being able to just be present. That's a good question.

You know, it looks like we have time for one more question. I'm going to sum up these together because I'm getting lots of people asking specific things. Doesn't make a difference, should I fast some of the time? Will that make me more mindful? Or should I eat three meals or small meals during the day? How I eat. Does that make a difference? With mindfulness and eating? I know you get asked those questions all the time as a coach. Is there a way you should be eating or formula for eating? I just wanted to see what your thoughts are on that.

And you are right. I do get that question quite a bit. And really the answer is that it's really going to come down to you as an individual. And if you do end up fasting, just to be able to maybe determine what your, what real hunger feels like, I've had some clients that they've never gone, admittedly, more than say four hours without eating. So, of course from a safety standpoint you have to be careful and if you are diabetic or you have other health conditions, but if that's the purpose, then that can help you at least identify what that feels like. But, as far as then having a set schedule of eating, the mindfulness practice kind of gets a little bit away from this as far as I need to eat at 6:00 and noon and 7 PM or whatever your schedule is like. It's really looking more at, okay, how does my body feel? Am I really hungry at noon? Should I wait until 1:00? Really you have to look at your schedule and how that fits in. There's just not an easy answer to exactly how you should eat. But I think they can both, fasting, does have a place for some, to at least experience what that's like. Not for too long but just to go without food for, again, longer than three or four hours per

And it comes down to everybody is an individual, right? It's hard to answer that question on a call. Thank you for attempting that. I appreciate that. I think people need to look at this as a starting point and use your resources to figure out how to move forward. So, it does look like we are out of time. I do want to let everyone know we have a satisfaction poll appear if you could please rate your satisfaction. It says please rate your overall satisfaction with today's webinar. The first answer is very satisfied. The next one is satisfied. The next one is dissatisfied and the last one is very dissatisfied. When you click on the button, you

will not see anything happen but you are registering your boat so click on the button that you are wanting to vote on and that will actually register your vote. Again, next, on the radio button next to your response and that would broadcast the result. I also want to let you know the certificate of completion is here for you to download. Just click on the certificate to highlight its, down to the bottom of the pot and click on the download files button. That will open another window in your Internet browser and allow you to download the certificate of completion. Thank you, everyone, for joining us today. We appreciate it. I wish you well and lots of luck on your mindfulness journey and thank you, so much, Maureen , for sharing your expertise with us today pick

My pleasure. Thank you for having me, Trent eight.

All right. By, everyone. Have a great day.

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