



Eating Awareness

Nutritional Common Sense Part II

By: Gary E. Foresman, MD

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Sorry for the delay since our first article, Leonardo is now seven weeks old, he and mom rock. To refresh you, [this is the first article](#), and although I briefly mentioned this practice, I wish to expound upon Eating Awareness.

The first and only concept: *Locus of Control*. I am possibly guiltier than most doctors of taking this away from you, because I do discuss the importance of nutrition in developing optimal wellness, more so than in treating diseases. However, I know that people possess more misconceptions regarding nutrition, today more than ever, and this directly compromises my ability to help them. Society, advertising, and/or misinformed physicians have taken away your locus of control, or more appropriately stated, you have given it to them, wittingly or unwittingly. In the end, it is only through cultivating awareness along with knowledge that you as an individual can find your optimal dietary path, regaining the *Locus of Control* in your digestive decisions.

As mentioned in our first article, begin with a stress management practice. Unless you deal with the overall stress of the world, old stress-related dietary patterns return (or drug, alcohol, or other addictive behaviors). A stress management practice cultivates present moment awareness that naturally augments our mealtime mastery. Recall that we digest best in the relaxed, parasympathetic state, truly turning “on” our digestion for optimal health only makes sense.

Should you have any digestive health, weight, or energy concerns, or even if you simply strive for optimal wellness, follow the following steps to activate eating awareness:

1. Agree to sit down while eating, bringing full attention to your food.
2. Utilize your dining table, or simply have a set location to eat.
3. Turn off all distractions, phones, tablets, TVs, etc. Soothing music in the background is fine. Keep conversation to non-controversial subjects.

4. Take a moment of silence, prayer, blessing of your food, capture this moment.
5. Notice the colors, aromas, the attractiveness of the meal, how is your hunger level? Have you waited too long? Are you actually hungry?
6. With each bite notice the *attention*; has it remained with the eating process? As well notice your *intention*; is it on enjoyment and energizing you, or possibly on just “getting through” your meal and onto something else?
7. As each bite comes to your mouth, notice the chewing, slowly, of your food, and the swallowing of each food bolus, “watching” it travel to your stomach before going after the next bite.
8. With each continued bite, does the meal satisfy the six flavors: sweet, sour, salt, bitter, pungent, and astringent?
9. Does your hunger tell you when to stop, or do you continue eating because there are children starving in America? You paid for this and you’re not wasting it!? You cooked this and somebody’s gonna eat it!? Or some other reason not directly related to that moment.
10. Take a moment also at the end of the meal. Evaluate your hunger vs your desires. Are you comfortable, overstuffed, or possibly still hungry? Wait at least five minutes before getting seconds or desserts, letting hunger reign over desire!

How you feel before, during, and after a meal helps delineate how well you fueled yourself. This should hone whether what you ate was based on instincts versus the choices made via the subconscious manipulation of marketing that affects most people’s food selection. I sincerely believe a consciously experienced chocolate chip cookie, savored and relished, will serve a person far better than a hastily devoured organic salad eaten unconsciously!

Eating well takes time: preparing food lists, shopping more frequently, food preparation, and of course in conscious eating. Even spending a few meals per week eating as described above can transform your relationship with food in such a positive way. Most importantly you will find your food “talks” to you, yes, viscerally! But it also communicates at the level of the nucleus of each cell. The more we tune in to our food, the more harmonious we become with nature, as it is us!

Our next article will discuss intermittent fasting/intermittent metabolic switching as a key strategy for metabolic syndrome and healthy aging in general.

Your Journey to Health and Healing,

Gary E Foresman MD

