

Will Power

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE PIONEERS ASSISTANCE FUND

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MINDFUL EATING

Q: I see Greek yogurt everywhere. Is it good for you?

A: Are you asking if yogurt is good for you as an individual, or is yogurt good for everyone? We don't give personalized nutrition advice, but all year we have been asking our readers to practice mindfulness, which is avoiding mechanical motions in everyday life and focusing on the actions, thoughts and feelings of our daily routines. Using mindful eating, you can figure out if yogurt is really good for you.

Mindful eating is as much about what you eat, as it is about how you eat. Think of it as establishing a relationship with your food. Mindfulness establishes a connection between you and whatever you are doing. Therefore, mindful eating establishes a connection between eating your food and living in your body. The trouble is, many of us eat rather mechanically, without much attention to the full experience. Below are some mindful eating tips you can put into practice today:

1. Before you purchase a food item, read the label. Are there ingredients you do not recognize? Does it contain ingredients to which you may have an allergy? Is the carbohydrate count relevant to your [diabetic] diet?

JOKE OF THE MONTH

"Did you hear that the invisible man married the invisible woman? Nice family, but they weren't much to look at."

2. Before you prepare the food, have you thought about how you want to serve it? Will you use a fork or a spoon? Is it for breakfast or a snack?

3. Before you eat the food, take stock of your situation. Are you eating on the run? Are you setting a place at the table? Dining alone? In a hurry?

4. While you eat, think about the food and what it is doing for your body. Is it giving energy? Is it pleasing the taste buds? Appreciate it. This is the mind-body connection.

5. After your meal, check in with your body. How do you feel when digesting this food? Imagine the calories traveling through your body to your organs and muscles. Pay particular attention to your gut. How do you feel?

Many yogurt products contain good bacteria that mix with the bacteria already in your intestines. This balance can reduce inflammation. This is why people think its "good" for us all. You will know it is good for you by checking in mentally after eating it. Let us know how you do!

Resources:

"Mindful Eating for a Healthier Brain-Gut Connection" by Jennifer Wolking, available at: <http://www.mindful.org/mindful-eating-for-a-healthier-brain-gut-connection/>

WILL CALL

Do you or someone you know need our assistance? Call toll-free (888) 994-3863 or wrpioneers.org



THE NEW TRASH TALK

Candy wrappers, gifts, cards and envelopes represent the holidays. They can be fun to look at, give and receive. However, these holiday treats are taking a toll on our environment. Mother Earth is running out of places to store our castoffs, and it's a problem.

Fortunately, modern thinkers have invented as many ways to dispose of stuff as we have to generate it. Some of these innovations are accompanied by new language used to describe the processing, facilities and tools involved. Many American communities, small and large, have introduced trash programs and public awareness campaigns to get citizens interested in participating. Perhaps your community has rolled out some of these:

REDUCING LANDFILL TRASH - What we used to call just "garbage," before we sorted cans, bottles and newspapers out of it, goes to landfills. We have limited land for this, and trash is getting into our oceans. Perhaps you have heard, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." Landfill trash must be reduced.

COMPOSTING is what you do with food scraps (bones, fruit and vegetable peels, egg shells, etc.) and certain food-soiled containers (pizza boxes, waxed milk cartons, takeout carriers, coffee filters). Compost is collected in huge vats, often seeded with worms, to produce a substance that can be mixed with dirt and used for plants and crops. Some communities offer composting bins for free

pick-up on garbage day. These are the same garbage cans where you would put yard clippings, which are also compost.

E-WASTE is the term for outdated or broken electronics. These items contain metal, plastic, glass and sometimes batteries that can contaminate groundwater if placed in landfills. Some of these electronics components can be captured and reused in new electronics or recycled. If nothing else, they need to be disposed of safely. Your community may have an e-waste collection day or drop-off center. Check with your local sanitation department. Call our social workers to find a drop-off center in your area.

TERRACYCLING is a term used by a private company, called TerraCycle. They pride themselves on finding ways to recycle and reuse items that were once thought of as pure landfill trash, such as cigarette butts and juice boxes. Learn more at their website www.terracycle.com.

We made this mess and together we can clean it up. Thanks for your contribution!

Resources:

"Sustainable Management of Electronics" at:

<http://www2.epa.gov/smm-electronics> - click on For Consumers.

"Sorting Out Waste," a UNESCO publication, available at:

http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/ste/pdf_files/sourcebook/module17.pdf

“ QUOTE OF THE MONTH

I was born on Nov. 4, which is election day. . . . My birthday has made more men and sent more back to honest work than any other days in the year - Will Rogers

