



Point32Health

**The Hunger Habit:  
A Neuroscience-Based  
Approach to  
Healthier Eating**

**Session 2:  
Is It Time to Eat?**

With  
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# Overview of All Sessions

1. Habit Loops and Curiosity
2. **Is It Time to Eat? – the Hunger Test and the wisdom of our bodies**
3. Surfing Your Cravings – using the craving tool to dismantle unhelpful habits
4. A Bigger, Better Offer – building your enchantment databank

# Arriving

Move from doing into just being

Take a breath or stretch a bit

Observe your experience

- What's going on inside and outside right now?
- Just notice – no need to change it

Notice and nurture kindness and warmth of heart

# Questions from Last Week?

# Overview of Session 2

1. Your goal
2. Your superpower – Awareness
3. The Hunger Test
4. Mindful eating
5. The Pleasure Plateau
6. RAIN – awareness of emotions/moods
7. Action steps

# Your Goal

# Awareness – Your Superpower

# Awareness

- Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”  
– Viktor Frankl, psychiatrist, concentration camp survivor
- It's a whole-nervous-system phenomenon
- It's effortless
- Will explain the neuroscience of its importance in next session



# The Hunger Test

# Benefit of the Hunger Test

For many of us – it's difficult to tell whether we are hungry between mealtimes or having a craving

The Hunger Test empowers you to base the decision to snack on whether you're hungry

## The Hunger Test

- Helps to recalibrate and reintegrate body and mind
- Rewires connections between body and brain
- Frees us from automatic snacking

# The Hunger Test – Use It Before You Snack

- Use the Hunger Test when you have the urge to eat outside of mealtimes
- Helps you tell the difference between eating to soothe an emotion and eating because you're hungry
- The more you practice it, the quicker body and mind recalibrate
- You'll receive a PDF of this as a handout with this session's f/u email
  
- Step 1: Put a check by the X in each row that fits you in that moment

Experience	Stress/Emotion	Habit	Hunger
Bored		X	
Avoiding something	X	X	
Restless	X		
Tense	X		
Feeling overwhelmed	X		
Difficulty concentrating	X		X
Moody	X		X
Headache	X		X
Irritable/easily frustrated	X		X
Stomach growling			X
Dizzy/light-headed			X
Stomach empty			X
Thirsty		X	

# The Hunger Test – Step 2

Total the number of checkmarks in each column. Sometimes it's clear from Step 1 whether you're hungry.

If you have a tie between columns, move on to Step 2.

Step 2: how many hours ago did you eat?

If it's less than 4 or 5 hours, snacking urge is a response to emotion.

If it's more than 4 or 5 hours, it's probably bodily hunger.



**Instead of avoiding triggers or substituting, bring in wedge of awareness between craving and eating / smoking / other habits**

# Mindful Eating Practice

# Mindful eating

Move from doing to being, let go of rushing

Select something small to eat – a raisin is perfect

Feel its weight in your hand

Inhale any fragrance

Put the food item in your mouth

Feel its presence – awareness of taste and texture, notice any emotions

Chew it slowly and swallow as comfortable

Maintain awareness until the taste and substance are gone

Hold yourself with kindness and congratulations!



# Your Pleasure Plateau

# The Pleasure Plateau – Use It While Eating

- When you're slightly hungry, get one of your favorite foods.
- With the first bite, liking and wanting are both high.
- Pay attention after each bite. Is this more, same or less pleasurable than the last bite?
- If bites start to become less pleasant, **you've reached your plateau**. This is your brain's signal to slow down.
- Next – Build this into eating meals. Use your mouth as your guide and give your stomach 15 min to catch up - it takes 20 min after first bite for the brain to register fullness. Give your body time to process how much you've eaten.
- When you eat dessert after a meal, you reach the plateau more quickly.
- Stop eating when the bites are no longer pleasant – even if there's still food on your plate!



**The cliff of overindulgence is at the other side of the pleasure plateau – slow down so you don't go off the cliff!**

# RAIN

# RAIN Practice

**Recognize** – that a mood, feeling, or emotion is present

**Accept** – that it is there for now

**Investigate** – the body sensations that tell you what you are feeling

**Note/Nurture/Non-identify**

- Sharpen awareness of sensations
- Offer yourself kindness
- Awareness is bigger than the emotion

# Action Steps

**Use the Hunger Test**  
**Mindful eating (try a raisin)**  
**Map Your Pleasure Plateau**  
**Do RAIN**

**Extra credit:**  
**Watch Dr. Jud's talk**  
**Read *The Hunger Habit***

# Thank You!