

Eight Rules for Healthy Living

Ichinori Tsumagari

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We had a wonderful family day at the Bronx Zoo today. Our oldest daughter and we had been talking about taking our six-year-old twin grandsons to the Bronx Zoo for some time. We decided to go this Sunday, despite concerns about the hot, steamy weather (95 degrees and possible thunderstorms), our old car, and a few other things. Surprisingly, everything went wonderfully. The zoo was amazing, the weather turned out to be nice and comfortable in the shaded areas with lots of trees. Everything went smoothly, and everyone did his or her best to make the day a wonderful experience. In the end, it felt like someone was listening to our prayers, even though it may seem like a small thing compared to world peace and other larger issues.

Our Sunday experience reminds me of the importance of deep listening. Father Moon also talks about this point quite often. Our wellness tips also talk about the importance of listening to our body - listen to your body's natural hunger and fullness cues, using the following tips.

"In 1957 and 1958, what kind of person was I? I was a great listener who patiently heard the stories

of every member, young or old, who wanted to share with me. People recognized me as someone who would listen to their stories, perhaps better than anyone else in Korea. When elderly ladies came to see me, they would talk about their marriage life from their wedding day, even telling me exactly how they loved their husbands. They shared everything they kept in their hearts. Anyone who came to see me said, "Father listens to all my stories." When they had nothing left to say, I started to speak. If you want to fill a bowl with something new, first you have to turn it upside down so that everything is emptied out. That is why I listened to them, putting myself in the position of enjoying what they had to say more than anyone else, even staying up all night to hear it. It is all about genuinely listening to others and then genuinely talking to them. That is the secret. That is how you give and receive." (096-322, 02/13/1978)

Foster a Balanced Approach to Eating by Tuning into your Natural Hunger and Fullness Signals.

It's easy to lose touch with our body's hunger and fullness cues. Fortunately, there are some simple tools we can use to tune into the natural cues, including mindfulness, portion control, hunger scales, and moderation, amongst others - so that we can maintain a healthy relationship with food and avoid overeating or undereating.

Listen to your body's natural hunger and fullness cues, using the following tips:

1. Mindful Eating: Practicing mindfulness while eating allows you to pay attention to your body's

signals. Focus on the food's taste, texture and aroma. Avoid distractions like screens or work, and chew slowly, savoring each bite. This attentiveness helps you recognize when you're genuinely hungry and when you've had enough.

2. The Hunger Scale: Use a hunger scale ranging from 1 (ravenous) to 10 (stuffed). Aim to start eating when you're around a 3 or 4 (slightly hungry) and stop around a 6 or 7 (satisfied but not overly full).

3. Physical vs. Emotional Hunger: Physical hunger builds gradually and is felt in the stomach, while emotional hunger tends to arise suddenly and is often tied to specific emotions. Pause and ask yourself if you're eating to satisfy a physical need or to cope with emotions like stress, sadness or boredom.

4. Stay Hydrated: Thirst can sometimes masquerade as hunger. Drink water throughout the day to ensure you're adequately hydrated. Before reaching for a snack, have a glass of water and see if the feeling persists.

5. Listen to your Body: Learn to trust your body's signals. Avoid rigid diet rules that dictate when and how much to eat. Your body knows best when it's hungry and when it's had enough.

6. Practice Portion Control: Be mindful of portion sizes. Use smaller plates to help with portion control and prevent overeating. Serve a moderate portion, and if you're still hungry after finishing, give yourself permission for a small second helping.

7. Indulge in Moderation: Allow yourself to enjoy all foods in moderation. Restrictive eating can lead to feeling deprived, which might result in ignoring your body's hunger cues, or overeating when you finally allow yourself to indulge.

8. Check-in Post meal: After finishing a meal, assess how you feel. Are you comfortably satisfied, overly full, or still hungry? This reflection aids in understanding your body's signals for the next mealtime.



Developed by Erica Brown for Cleveland Clinic Wellness

Erica Brown, M.A., ATC is a health and wellness coach working with Cleveland Clinic's eHealth coaching program. She is a certified coach through the National Board of Health and Wellness, and she is board-certified and licensed as an athletic trainer. Erica is passionate about supporting her clients by shining a light on their gifts and strengths as they work to achieve their goals.

All photos by Ichinori Tsumagari