

# Turning Meals into Meditation

Follow this **ten-step plan** for mindful eating when you are feeling stressed about food and unable to cope with cravings.

**Step 1: Become aware.**  
Are you really hungry? What else might you be craving or feeling that is making you turn to food?



**Step 2: Prep with care.**  
If you can, take time to prepare your food thoughtfully. Focus on your many blessings—where the food came from, the plants, animals, and people who grew it, and the people who prepared it, even in your kitchen, your office, or your grocery store.



**Step 3: Sit down to eat.**  
Never eat standing up, on the go, or at the counter. It can be a traditional grace before meals or a spontaneous expression of gratitude. Sit at a table, preferably in an undistracted space with a real plate and some medium of peace: make the food taste better.



**Step 4: Say a blessing.**  
It can be a traditional grace before meals or a spontaneous expression of gratitude.



**Step 5: Look at your food.**  
Decide whether you are okay with this food "becoming you."



**Step 6: Smell your food.**  
Really take in the aroma of what's before you.



**Step 7: Eat slowly.**  
Take small bites, chew slowly, and savor the taste. Make sure the one you have in your mouth is completely gone. Chew slowly and carefully.



**Step 8: Focus on your food.**  
As you eat, concentrate on the taste and texture of your food. Don't let your mind drift to other things or your food's appearance. Instead, savor and contemplate this one action with intensity.



**Step 9: Let it down.**  
If you feel your preparation or eating has become stressful, write down when you were down when you were down. Note the circumstances or problems that may have prompted you to eat when you might not be hungry.



**Step 10: Finish the way you started.**  
When you are done eating, clean up with the same care you used in preparing the food. It's one seamless, prayerful action.



**General Rule:** Become a planner. If you begin to feel stressed about food, take a step to the grocery store with these steps in mind; you will automatically lean toward healthier options.



**Based on:** *Coping With Food*, Carolyn R. Wells, PhD. Find out more at [www.wellsandgrace.com/cwtf](http://www.wellsandgrace.com/cwtf).

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