

## An Example of Self-Coaching

Below is an example of how a young woman (“Jessica”) used the app one day to coach herself to eat mindfully (i.e., what she might do and say). The **GOALS** of this woman were to reduce the following mindless eating habits:

1. **Getting too hungry before eating** (i.e., not being mindful of hunger)
2. Two types of **eating when not hungry** (i.e., not being mindful of fullness):
  - a. **Emotional eating** (eating when bored)
  - b. **External eating** (eating when studying, when others offer her food)

As you will see below, the young woman in this example set **COACHING ALERTS** on the app that were relevant to her personal eating goals. She also strategically timed the alerts so that she would receive particular prompts at times when she predicted they would be most helpful to her. For instance, she set the alert: *“NOTICE URGES TO EAT WHEN YOU’RE BORED OR PROCRASTINATING”* at 10 pm because she has trouble resisting urges to eat when she’s bored and working in the library late at night.

This script also shows which of the steps to BE MINDFUL this young woman used throughout her day to coach herself to eat mindfully.

Key to fonts and pictures used in the example:

**Quotes in this font = what she says to coach herself to eat mindfully**



= *COACHING ALERT RECEIVED*



= indicates that she used the Mindful Eating Coach app



= indicates that she “checked-in” with her stomach to assess her hunger level and/or how she feels after eating



**7:00 am:** *SET YOUR INTENTION: BE YOUR OWN MINDFUL EATING COACH ALL DAY.*

**9:00 am:** Jessica wakes up and sees the alert above. **Time to set my mindful eating goals for today. My goals are to not get too hungry before eating and to resist urges to eat for external or emotional reasons. To help me meet these goals, I'm going to stick to my regular eating schedule and then if I want to eat outside of meal and snack times, I am going to think about whether I'm really hungry or want to eat for non-hunger reasons.**



**9:30 am:** Jessica *Breathes* in and out and *Monitors* her hunger. **I'm not really hungry, but I know when I skip breakfast I am starving by lunchtime, so I better eat to moderate fullness so I don't get too hungry before lunch.** Jessica *Intentionally* decides to eat and, *Now*, she recalls past lessons of what will be "worth it" both now and later. **What would feel good to eat? I think the usual—a small bowl of cereal—would taste good and hold me over.**



Jessica eats breakfast and follows the rest of the steps to *BE MINDFUL*. She completes her Appetite Ratings after eating – and she praises herself for staying in the green! For her How Mindful? Rating, Jessica feels like she ate mostly mindfully, so she selects the Mostly Sunny icon. For what went well, Jessica selects "*Planned ahead so wasn't too hungry,*" "*Made an intentional and balanced decision to eat,*" and "*Accurately predicted what would be 'worth it' to eat.*"



**30 min after breakfast:** **Yes, I still feel good – moderately full, but not too full. I needed to eat, and my typical breakfast was a good choice.**



**12:00 pm:** *WHEN YOU GET TOO HUNGRY IT'S HARD TO EAT MINDFULLY.*



**That reminds me – I should check in with my hunger . . .** Jessica *Breathes* in and out and *Monitors* her hunger level **I'm at about a 3 on the rating scale, so I think it's best to go ahead and eat. Sometimes I wait to eat lunch until 1 or 2 pm, and I know that when I wait I get too hungry and I eat too quickly and too much.** She *Intentionally* decides to eat and, *Now*, she recalls past lessons of what will be "worth it" both now and later. **I think a generous-sized salad with chicken and a bunch of vegetables I like would taste good and still feel good later on. I remember feeling good the last time I ate that. And a wheat roll with it would help me feel satisfied and full until my afternoon snack. That way I get some protein, veggies, fiber, and a taste I like.**



**12:15 pm:** Jessica eats her lunch and follows the rest of the steps to *BE MINDFUL*. She rates her appetite as a 3 before eating and a 5.5 after eating. **Way to go, you made really mindful choices! And eating at noon rather than waiting was the right call!** For her How Mindful? Rating, Jessica selects the Mostly Sunny icon because she feels like she ate very mindfully. For what went well, she chooses: "*I predicted accurately what would feel good afterwards,*" "*Ate slowly and enjoyed my food,*" and "*Stayed tuned in so was able to stop in the green.*"



**30 min after lunch:** **That lunch worked – I feel comfortable and not too full. And I think having the roll helped me feel more satisfied than just the salad.**




**2:30 pm:** In her dorm, a friend offers Jessica some cookies she made. Jessica's tempted to eat them. She *Breathes* in and out, *Explores* non-hunger reasons she wanting to eat, and *Monitors* her hunger. **I'm not really hungry, so I probably don't need this cookie. I just want to eat because the food's there and it looks so yummy. I have a protein bar waiting for me in my dorm room for an afternoon snack. It's not quite as tasty as a cookie, but it's still sweet and chocolate-y. I know from the past that a protein bar keeps my energy up better and**


**keeps me full longer than a cookie.** Jessica *Intentionally* decides not to eat the cookie and to wait to eat until her planned afternoon snack.

**4:00 pm:** Jessica eats her planned afternoon snack and follows the steps to **BE MINDFUL**. She rates her appetite level as a 3.5 before eating and a 4.5 after. Jessica rates herself as eating partly mindfully (the Partly Sunny/Cloudy icon) because she feels like she wasn't totally tuned in while she was eating. She was checking her email and talking to a friend while she was eating, so she didn't totally savor her food. For what went well, Jessica selects: *"Accurately predicted what would be 'worth it' to eat."* For lessons to remember next time, she chooses: *"When I eat fast and don't enjoy my food, I don't feel as satisfied."* At the bottom, she types in a personal lesson: *"A protein bar is a good afternoon snack because it satisfies my sweet tooth, while also keeping me full and keeping up my energy."*


 **30 min after snack:** *I feel really good after the protein bar. I feel satisfied and my stomach feels just full, but not so full that I won't be hungry for dinner later.*


 **5:00 pm:** *DISTRACT YOURSELF WHEN YOU HAVE NON-HUNGER URGES TO EAT. Nighttime is usually when I the most problems eating when not hungry. This is a good reminder that I don't have to eat when I have these urges. If I just distract myself, I'll forget I even wanted to eat. Tonight I think I'll try talking to a friend if I really want to eat but I'm not hungry.*

**7:00 pm:** Jessica has dinner (as planned) at a restaurant with friends. She *Breathes* in and out and *Monitors* her hunger. **I feel moderately hungry. My afternoon snack helped me to not get too hungry before dinner so I can make mindful food choices at dinner and not eat too quickly or too much. During dinner, I want to work on talking to my friends and focusing on the conversation, but also checking-in with my stomach periodically as I eat to make sure I don't go past moderate fullness.** Now, Jessica recalls past lessons and thinks about what would feel good to eat both now and later? **I really love the burgers at this restaurant, but they come with fries. I remember last time that when I ate the burger and all the fries it tasted great at the time, but my stomach didn't feel so great later on. I think what would be best this time would be to substitute the fries with a side of broccoli.**

 Jessica eats dinner and follows the rest of the steps to **BE MINDFUL**. After dinner, she rates her appetite level before eating as a 2 (she got a little bit too hungry because the food take awhile to come out!) and after as a 5.5. **Eating the burger with a side of broccoli helped me to not get too full. That's something I should remember in the future when I order a burger.** Jessica rates herself as being mostly mindful (the Mostly Sunny icon) and, for what went well, she chooses: *"Accurately predicted what would be 'worth it' to eat"* and *"Stayed tuned in so was able to stop in the green."* She also types in: *"Order side of broccoli with burger instead of fries."*

 **30 min after dinner:** *My stomach definitely feels much better now after eating the broccoli instead of fries.*

 **10:00 pm:** *NOTICE URGES TO EAT WHEN YOU'RE BORED OR PROCRASTINATING. That reminds me that at the library tonight I need to be mindful of urges to eat just because I'm studying and bored. If I'm not really hungry, I want to think about what would be most effective for me to do—to eat a little something or to distract myself until the urge goes away.*

 **11:00 pm:** Jessica's in the library studying. **I'm bored and tired and I just don't want to do this. Maybe a brownie from the library coffee shop would make studying not as miserable.** She *Breathes*, *Explores* possible non-hunger reasons for wanting to eat, and *Monitors* her hunger. **I'm not hungry, I know I'm just bored and studying. But I really want one of their brownies. I'll just have one so I don't feel deprived.** Jessica *Intentionally*

chooses to eat because she thinks that might be most effective in this instance because she really really wants a brownie.



Jessica eats the whole brownie and follows the rest of the steps to *BE MINDFUL*. When she does her Appetite Ratings, she rates her hunger level before eating as a 4.5 and her fullness level after as a 6.5. **I am way too full. Next time, eating just half of the brownie would feel better. Or maybe I could bring a couple Hershey's Kisses with me to the library to satisfy my chocolate cravings when I'm bored, or I could try talking to my friends to ride out the urge.** For How Mindful?, she selects that she ate Not So Mindfully (Mostly Cloudy icon) and for lessons to remember she selects: *"Don't repeat foods or amounts that are not 'worth it'"* and she types a personal lesson at the bottom: *"Eating the whole brownie at the library was too much. Next time, try half, bring Hershey's Kisses, or talk to friends at the library."*



30 min after snack: **I feel a little uncomfortable and I don't really think the brownie was worth it. I know it's not helpful to feel guilty or criticize myself. Instead I'm going to focus on how I can eat more mindfully next time. I'm going to remember how uncomfortable I feel right now to motivate me to not eat the whole brownie next time. Or maybe I will try bringing a small chocolate protein bar so I have something to look forward to when I take a break from studying. That would be something that would satisfy my chocolate craving, and I would feel ok about after eating.**