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## New Online Mindful Eating Course!

### Mindful Eating & Stress Management Educational Program with Joseph Wieliczko, Psy.D.

**Time:** 7:00 pm - 8:00pm **Dates:** Tuesdays, June 30; July 7, 14, 21, 28; August 4, 11, 18

**Fee:** \$30.00 per session, total of \$240.00 for the complete 8 session program. Limited space: 12

A waiting list and announced dates for more programs will be made as needed.

**To receive registration information send an email with your full name and phone number to:**

**Drjwieliczko@gmail.com**

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### Today's topic: Your Monkey Mind

Dr. Edward Hallowell (psychiatrist) coined the term - Attention Deficit Trait

- brain overload
- Symptoms: distractibility, inner frenzy and impatience

Research: 2250 subjects called randomly over weeks, asking:

- Is your mind wandering?
- How happy are you right now?
- What are you doing?

Results:

1. The mind is wandering at least 50% of the time.
2. When the mind wanders it is associated with being unhappy regardless of what people are doing.

3. Whether the mind is present or wondering is a better predictor of happiness than what people are doing. The monkey mind makes us unhappy.

Over 500 years ago: Da Vinci describe the average person as someone who "looks without seeing, listens without hearing, touches without feeling, eats without tasting, moves without awareness of odor or fragrance, and talks without thinking."

What drives the Monkey Mind?

1. **Stress** - Stress is our unwillingness to accept the present moment

Forms: thoughts, feelings, mood, health issues, social issues, political issues, weather, etc.

50 mini-stress reactions per day

70-80% of office visits

2. **Default network:** the mind is naturally unsettled, wandering when not on a task

Ex. start of sleep, at a red light, waiting in the doctor's office

It is not your fault - not unique to you.

3. **Emotions** - unaccepted and intolerable emotional states-

Try to get away from it: eating, drinking, depression, anxiety, arguing etc.

People with eating difficulties are known to have more difficulties managing emotions.

4. **Beliefs** ex. "Must get everything done." "I shouldn't feel this way." "Why does this keep happening to me."

Beliefs are rigid, create more stress and demands on us.

5. **Thoughts: 50 to 70,000 thoughts a day, 98% of these thoughts are false!**

Thoughts are not facts - we react as if they are facts

6. **Amygdala** the alarm bell, creates false sense of threat.

Mind scrambles to solve the problem - eliminate the threat

7. **Running narrative** - the story of what is happening Like a commentator for a movie

Did you ever talk over a disagreement (in your thoughts) with someone and you are all alone? - driving, in the shower?

How does this effect your relationship to food?

200 - 300 food related decisions a day.

Factors which influence eating related decisions:

- The more colors on a plate, the more you eat
- The more people at the table, the more you eat
- Your mood
- Time of day
- Your thoughts, feelings & stress level
- The weather, time of the day & day of the week
- Who we are with
- Where you are (at home, in a restaurant)
- The occasion (a birthday, Thanksgiving, Tuesday, New Years Day etc.)
- Look of food
- The mood at the table

**Triggers to overeat of those seeking bariatric surgery:**

eating with friends, socializing, being tired, bored, the taste of food, smell of food, cravings, being angry, stressed, well cooked food, feeling happy, depressed/upset, feeling anxious, being alone, celebrations, business functions etc.

**We are distracted by endless forces.**

**Notice none of these factors having anything to do with whether or not you should eat.**

**The problem:      We are not embodied**

What is your relationship to your monkey mind? Is your relationship ruled by annoyance, feeling defeated, energized, frustrated, depressed?

The solution:

Attention is required for: **self-regulation and self-control**

We are better able to make food related decisions if attentive and aware.

Mindfulness means to pay attention, on purpose in the present moment, non-judgmental.

## **What can we do to bring greater focus to eating?**

Meditate

Adopt an attitude of patience, trust, non-striving, and acceptance.

Learn mindfulness of emotions

Practice informal meditation

Adopt self-compassion practices

Learn the BASICS of mindful eating

8 types of hunger

10 point scale

Taking a breathe

Slow down

Things you can do:

- Be aware of the monkey mind, and choose to bring your attention back on this moment.

Letting Go

- Ground yourself in the body (come back home!)
- Watch the monkey mind without indulging in it.
- Do not fight the monkey mind. It is here. Befriend it, be kind and accepting of it.
- There is no goal to get rid of the monkey mind. As we gently acknowledge, accept, and redirect your attention; the monkey mind dissipates.
- When you eat, TAKE A BREATH!

**These practices are not to erase or obliterate the monkey mind -  
But to be in a wiser relationship to it.**