

# Mindful Eating — Workbook

This workbook is your hands-on companion to the Mindful Eating course. Use it to record your hunger readings, map emotional triggers, experiment with sensory eating practices, and dismantle the food rules that keep you stuck. Each section mirrors a course module — work through them sequentially for best results, or dip into any section when you need it most.

## The Hunger-Fullness Foundation

Build your internal hunger compass by logging, rating, and reflecting on your eating signals across a full week.

### Exercise: Seven-Day Hunger-Fullness Log

Before each eating occasion, rate your hunger on the 1–10 scale (1 = ravenous, 10 = stuffed). Rate again halfway through the meal and once more when you stop. Do this for every eating occasion — meals, snacks, bites — for seven consecutive days. Do not change what you eat; just observe and record.

- What number were you at when you started eating — and what physical sensations told you that? (e.g., stomach growling, lightheadedness, mild emptiness)
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- What was your mid-meal rating? Did you continue eating, slow down, or stop? What drove that decision?
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- What number were you at when you finished, and how did your body feel 20 minutes later? Was there a difference?
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- After seven days, which patterns surprise you most — times of day, settings, or emotional states where your hunger readings are consistently off?
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### Worksheet: Hunger Type Identification Sheet

For each eating occasion over three days, identify which of the five hunger types was most active (eye, nose, stomach, mouth, cellular). Use the descriptions from Lesson 1 as your guide. Note what you ate and whether eating satisfied the specific hunger type you identified.

Date and time

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Situation / setting

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Dominant hunger type (eye / nose / stomach / mouth / cellular)

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Physical or sensory cue that identified it

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What you ate

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Did it satisfy the identified hunger? (yes / partially / no)

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Notes

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### Checklist: Slowdown Protocol — Daily Practice Checklist

- Put utensils down completely between every bite
- Chewed each bite 15–20 times before swallowing
- Swallowed fully before re-loading the fork
- Took a sip of water between every 3–4 bites
- Ate at least one meal with no screen or device active
- Timed at least one meal — it lasted 20 minutes or more
- Did the mid-meal pause: put utensil down, rated hunger, then continued or stopped

### Emotional Eating — Triggers, Cycles, and Interrupts

Map your personal emotional eating triggers and practise the Pause-and-Name interrupt strategy across a range of real situations.

#### Exercise: Emotional Eating Trigger Map

Track five emotional eating episodes this week — real incidents where you ate or strongly wanted to eat without physical hunger. Record each episode using the fields below immediately after it happens (memory fades quickly). After five entries, review for patterns and highlight your top recurring trigger.

- What happened in the 30 minutes before the urge to eat appeared? (situation, interaction, task, environment)

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- Which of the four core drivers best describes what you were feeling: stress/anxiety, boredom/emptiness, loneliness/disconnection, or anger/frustration? Get specific — not just 'stressed' but 'stressed about my performance review.'

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- Did you apply Pause-and-Name? If yes, what did you name, and did naming it change the intensity of the urge? If no, what got in the way?

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- After reviewing all five entries, what is your single highest-frequency trigger — and what one alternative response will you pre-commit to for that trigger this week?

#### Worksheet: SIFT Alternative Strategy Planner

Complete this worksheet in a calm moment, not during an urge. For each of the four emotional eating drivers, pre-select two alternatives using the SIFT framework (Stress, Idle mind, Feel connected, Tension discharge). Write them in specific, actionable terms — not 'go for a walk' but 'walk one loop around my block, approximately 8 minutes.'

Driver: Stress — Alternative 1 (specific action, location, duration)

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Driver: Stress — Alternative 2

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Driver: Boredom — Alternative 1

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Driver: Boredom — Alternative 2

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Driver: Loneliness — Alternative 1

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Driver: Loneliness — Alternative 2

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Driver: Anger/Frustration — Alternative 1

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Driver: Anger/Frustration — Alternative 2

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Which alternative requires the fewest steps to initiate? (This is your default go-to)

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What friction currently blocks your top alternative? How will you reduce it?

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### Checklist: Pause-and-Name Practice Tracker

- Noticed an eating urge arising outside a meal
- Stopped physically and took the 4-2-6 breath before acting
- Named the emotion specifically (not just 'bad' — the precise feeling)
- Asked 'what do I actually need right now?' and identified an answer
- Chose an alternative action OR consciously chose to eat with full awareness rather than reactively
- Recorded the episode in the Trigger Map within 10 minutes
- Did not use the experience as evidence of failure — stayed curious and observational

## Sensory Awareness and Eating Pleasure

Train deliberate sensory engagement with food through structured exercises, environment audits, and flavour mapping.

### Exercise: Raisin Exercise + First-Three-Bites Practice

Complete the Raisin Exercise once this week (any small food item, 5 full minutes of sensory exploration before eating). Then, for at least five meals, apply the five-step sensory sequence to the first three bites only: look, smell, taste, texture, aftertaste. Record observations below.

- Describe the Raisin Exercise in detail: what did you notice about the food using each sense that you had never noticed before at normal eating speed?  

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- Which of the five sensory steps (look, smell, taste, texture, aftertaste) was hardest to sustain attention on — and what pulled your attention away?  

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- After applying the first-three-bites sequence to five meals, did your overall meal satisfaction change? Did you eat more or less than usual? What do you attribute that to?  

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- What specific flavour or texture did you discover you had been missing or underappreciating in your meals?  

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### Worksheet: Eating Environment Audit

Walk through your primary eating space(s) and assess each environment factor against the evidence-based guidelines from Lesson 5. Rate each item 1–3 (1 = needs change, 2 = partial, 3 = optimised) and note one specific change you will make this week.

Plate size: current size in inches / rating 1–3

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Serving location (table vs kitchen): current habit / rating 1–3

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Plate-food colour contrast: current situation / rating 1–3

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Lighting quality: current situation / rating 1–3

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Dedicated eating surface (table vs desk/couch): current situation / rating 1–3

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Counter clutter (food items visible on countertop): current count / rating 1–3

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Phone policy at meals: current habit / rating 1–3

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Food visibility in fridge (prepped vs unprepared): current situation / rating 1–3

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One specific change I will implement this week

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Expected impact on my eating behaviour

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### Checklist: Sensory Eating Environment — Weekly Optimisation Checklist

- Completed the Raisin Exercise at least once
- Applied the five-step sensory sequence to the first three bites of at least five meals
- Ate at least four meals seated at a dedicated table (not desk or couch)
- Kept at least four meals phone-free
- Cleared countertops of all food except a fruit bowl
- Pre-washed and pre-cut at least two vegetables for the week
- Identified my top unmet flavour or texture craving and built it into one meal this week
- Completed the Eating Environment Audit and made one physical change

### Exercise: Personal Flavour Map

Answer the following to build your personal flavour and texture profile. Use this map to design meals that are sensorially complete — reducing post-meal cravings by meeting sensory needs proactively.

- List your top 3 preferred flavour profiles in order: sweet, salty, sour, bitter, umami, spicy, fatty/rich, cooling/fresh.
- List your top 2 preferred textures: crunchy, creamy, chewy, tender, crispy, smooth. When these textures are absent from a meal, what do you typically reach for afterwards?
- Which flavour or texture is most consistently missing from your weekday meals? What is one small, nourishing ingredient that would provide it (e.g., toasted sesame seeds for crunch, a square of dark chocolate for sweet finish)?

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## Non-Judgmental Thinking and Sustainable Food Peace

Identify and dismantle food morality thinking, practise cognitive defusion, and design your personalised sustainable eating rhythm.

### Exercise: Food Morality Language Audit

For one week, catch every instance of morally loaded food language you use — in your own thoughts, spoken words, or writing. Log each phrase, identify the underlying belief it carries, and rewrite it using nutritionally neutral language. This exercise builds self-awareness of the cognitive layer that drives restriction-binge cycles.

- What are the three food-related phrases you use most often that carry moral weight? (e.g., 'I was so bad,' 'I cheated,' 'I deserve this,' 'I need to earn it') Write each one, then rewrite it in neutral factual language.
- What is the underlying belief behind your most frequent food-moral phrase? (e.g., 'If I eat X, I am a less disciplined person') Is this belief true? What is the actual evidence for and against it?

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• After one week of noticing, has the frequency of moral food language changed? What do you notice about the relationship between moral food thoughts and subsequent eating behaviour?

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• Write a one-paragraph personal food permission statement — a non-judgmental description of how you want to relate to food, in your own words.

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### Worksheet: Cognitive Defusion Practice Sheet

Identify your three most frequent critical food-related thoughts. For each one, practise the four defusion techniques from Lesson 11 (labelling, naming, leaves on a stream, singing). Record how the emotional charge of the thought shifts with each technique. Use this sheet during a calm moment, not in the middle of an eating urge.

Critical food thought #1 (write it verbatim)

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Labelled form: 'I notice I am having the thought that...'

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Nickname for this thought

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Emotional charge before defusion (1–10)

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Emotional charge after defusion (1–10)

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Critical food thought #2 (write it verbatim)

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Labelled form: 'I notice I am having the thought that...'

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Nickname for this thought

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Emotional charge before defusion (1–10)

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Emotional charge after defusion (1–10)

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Critical food thought #3 (write it verbatim)

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Labelled form: 'I notice I am having the thought that...'

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Nickname for this thought

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Emotional charge before defusion (1–10)

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Emotional charge after defusion (1–10)

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Which defusion technique worked best for you, and why?

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### Checklist: Sustainable Mindful Eating Rhythm — 30-Day Setup Checklist

- Defined three daily meal windows (30-minute windows, not exact times)
- Designated one meal per day as the fully sensory, device-free anchor meal
- Ensured this week's eating included all five taste categories at least once
- Identified three to five historically 'forbidden' foods and ate one deliberately and pleurably this week
- Reviewed my Hunger-Fullness log at the end of the week for new patterns
- Reviewed my Trigger Map at the end of the week and updated my top trigger alternative
- Did not label any day as 'ruined' — returned to awareness after any drift without self-judgment
- Practised at least one defusion technique on a food-critical thought
- Completed the Food Morality Language Audit for at least five days
- Scheduled a monthly eating rhythm review in my calendar

### Your Action Plan

1. Start your Hunger-Fullness Log today — before every eating occasion this week, rate your hunger on the 1–10 scale, check in midway, and rate your fullness when you stop.
2. Practise the Four-Part Slowdown Protocol at one meal per day this week: utensils down between bites, 15–20 chews, swallow before re-loading, water between every 3–4 bites.
3. Complete the Raisin Exercise this week — take any small food item and spend five full minutes exploring it with all senses before eating it.
4. Track five emotional eating episodes using the Trigger Map format — time, prior situation, emotion named, food wanted, and outcome. Review at the end of the week for your top pattern.
5. Complete the SIFT Alternative Strategy Planner during a calm moment and reduce the friction on your top alternative so it is easier to initiate than reaching for food.
6. Audit your eating environment using the worksheet — make one physical change this week (plate size, counter clearing, phone policy, dedicated eating space).
7. Build your Personal Flavour Map and add the missing flavour or texture into one meal this week before the post-meal snacking urge appears.
8. Conduct the Food Morality Language Audit for seven days — catch and rewrite every morally loaded food phrase you use.
9. Practise cognitive defusion on your three most frequent critical food thoughts using the Defusion Practice Sheet.
10. Design your sustainable weekly eating rhythm: set three meal windows, designate your daily anchor meal, and schedule a monthly review.











