

## Seeking Satisfaction

If your goal is to have more control around food, and to more easily walk away when you are done eating, make sure you are truly satisfied when you eat. How to do that? First how not to ...

### How not to feel satisfied when you eat:

- Choose based on caloric or fat content
- Choose when you are absolutely starving
- Choose when you are not hungry
- Choose when you are ignoring your hunger
- Choose when you're very upset or angry
- Choose based on how you think you should or should not eat
- Choose the least fattening item on the menu
- Choose the most fattening item on the menu
- Eat only salad until you are sprouting bunny ears and whiskers
- Choose whatever the person you are with is having (the above from *Normal Eating* by Koenig)
- Judge your behavior and what you're eating

### How to feel satisfied when you eat:

- Take the time to figure out what *you really want to eat*
  - Give yourself unconditional permission to eat it
    - Eat it in a relaxing, enjoyable atmosphere
      - Eat it without judgment

## Finding Satisfaction

If you have food rules and/or have restricted food intake, you might not know what you want. To feel truly satisfied, you must look *inside yourself* (not some "food rules" book!). Sit quietly and consider the following:

- How hungry are you?
  - If you are "3" \*\* or less, you may need something heavy and substantial.
  - If you are a "4," you may want something lighter.
- How long before you want to eat again?
  - If you'll be eating again within 1 or 2 hours, you may want to eat to a "5" or "6."
  - If you will not be eating again for 4 or 5 hours, you may want to eat to an "8."
- What food do you *really* want?
  - If you only focus on your desires? \_\_\_\_\_
  - If you consider your nutritional needs: \_\_\_\_\_
- Allow yourself to have what you truly want without judgment.
- Is the food not "safe?" What might help? (eat it with a friend or out at a restaurant, make plans for after you eat it, etc.)
- Monitor your self-talk--talk to yourself as you would a friend.
- Be open to body "feed-back" (nonjudgmental and with compassion).

The benefit to finding satisfaction? You have a clear signal that you are *done* eating. You will have a sense of comfort, both physical and emotional. You are practicing self-care at its most refined—you are re-learning to listen to and understand body cues, and developing the faith to trust and accept them.

\*\* Numbers in quotes refer to the HungerScale, which can be downloaded at the website below.