



THE **LEAN** BODY PROJECT

IT'S EASY WHEN YOU KNOW HOW

Navigating Moderation + Mindfulness and What “Listening to Your Body” Really Means



What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is constantly being AWARE of your decisions, what you are doing, and how you are feeling.

You are not overly obsessed with what you eat but you are not saying "screw it" and eating whatever the heck comes across your sight.

Mindfulness requires you to understand yourself.

Your personal preferences, how you handle stress, your schedule, and your body's unique physiology are all things that you need to investigate and become an expert on. You are the expert of your own body. No coach or nutritionist can possibly do that for you.

Mindfulness requires you to trust the process + yourself.

Trust the process - it's not one mess up and done, this takes patience, consistency, and PRACTICE!!

Trust yourself - you are able to go to a function or friend's house and choose to eat moderately and mindfully

What is Moderation?

Moderation is all about navigating the middle ground between starving and stuffed.

Many people experience fullness and hunger at the extremes (starving or stuffed).



What does “Listen to your body” even mean?

Body awareness is KEY to improved nutrition and exercise habits

People who struggle with diet and exercise their whole life struggle with understanding hunger cues, how emotions drive their movement and eating decisions, and how stress impacts their bodies.

People who develop a healthy relationship with their bodies, food, and fitness have built the skills, through practice, that allow them to be mindful, pay attention to their emotions, and tune into their body’s signals.

The skill of “listening to your body and learning what works for you” — is just that, a skill. And, with practice, can be developed and improved upon.

THIS TAKES TIME!

As Benjamin Franklin said, *“there are three things extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know one’s self.”*

Extremes such as meal plans and restrictive diets and cheat days take the thinking out of the game.

Being mindful of what you eat and how you feel take practice and requires you to actively make a choice.

BUT, the more you understand your body and the food that fuels it – eating well and moving more does begin to become automated.

Goal setting and creating practices

Goal: Lose weight.

You know that to lose weight you'll need to eat better consistently. So that's your real goal: Eat better consistently. *So, HOW do you do that?*

Skills: Which skills are required to eat better consistently? Hunger and appetite awareness are said to be the most important initial skill for making progress. *But what does that look like day in and day out?*

Practices: Eat slowly and eat until satisfied for one meal for a whole week, then focus on another meal the following week, etc.

3 Steps to Navigating Moderation, Mindfulness, and Body Awareness

- Find the middle ground
 - Track how you feel
- Change what isn't working

Finding the Middle Ground

Questions to ask yourself to navigate hunger:

- Why am I craving something right now?
- How hungry am I?
- Could I wait 20 minutes to eat in order to give myself time to make a healthier choice?
- Am I 80% full?
- Am I satisfied?
- Do I want to finish this or could I save it for later?

EX: "I'm about 80% full - could eat more but am good for now" or "I'm hungry but I could go another 30 minutes."

You can feel and acknowledge hunger without going right to a food choice you will later regret - learn to navigate the middle ground between starving and stuffed and manage your hunger.

Learn what foods are actually delicious and which are not.

Track how you feel

Assessments — such as the worksheets and journals used in this program — can be used to help you objectively observe and evaluate your eating and exercise choices, and how those choices make you feel.

Tracking this information allows you to collect data, interpret it, and make adjustments.

This is a good first step towards body awareness because it helps you get the facts, rather than just going by general feelings or concerns.

Too often we get so caught up in the pursuit of something else (like striving for an “ideal weight”) that we have no idea of how it feels to live in the here-and-now.

Questions to consider about your lifestyle:

- How are your sleep, energy, and mood?
- Do you get to eat the foods you enjoy?
- How do they make you feel?
- Do you have time for other people, hobbies, and activities in your life?
- What makes you feel strong, happy, and energetic?

Keep track of how you are feeling and see if your habits and actions are producing the type of feelings you want to have.

Let's talk about your “ideal weight” for a second...

Explore where your ideal came from in the first place. If you have A NUMBER in your head, consider its origin...

- Is it a previous body weight at which you felt good?
- A weight that you believed you “should” be?
- Did someone else—a coach, doctor, parent, friend—define it for you?

If the number on the scale drives you to feel bad about yourself and act in ways that aren't consistent with who and how you want to be in the world, then it is no longer a tool that serves you.

You are the expert of your body. Get to know it, understand it, listen to it, and appreciate all it does for you.

If the number on the scale drives you to feel bad about yourself and act in ways that aren't consistent with who and how you want to be in the world, then it is no longer a tool that serves you.

Change what isn't working

If you notice that you're spending a lot of time and energy on a quest for a "someday" ideal body, rather than enjoying and living in the one you have right now—especially if it's coming at a cost to your health!—perhaps it's time to change your measuring stick.

Instead of continuing to allow that attachment to an ideal body weight rule your life, let the things that truly help you be your best guide.

Your healthy weight may be different than what you envisioned, but you will find that you're stronger, fitter, faster, and happier.