



Remove the guilt THIS EASTER!

AUTHOR

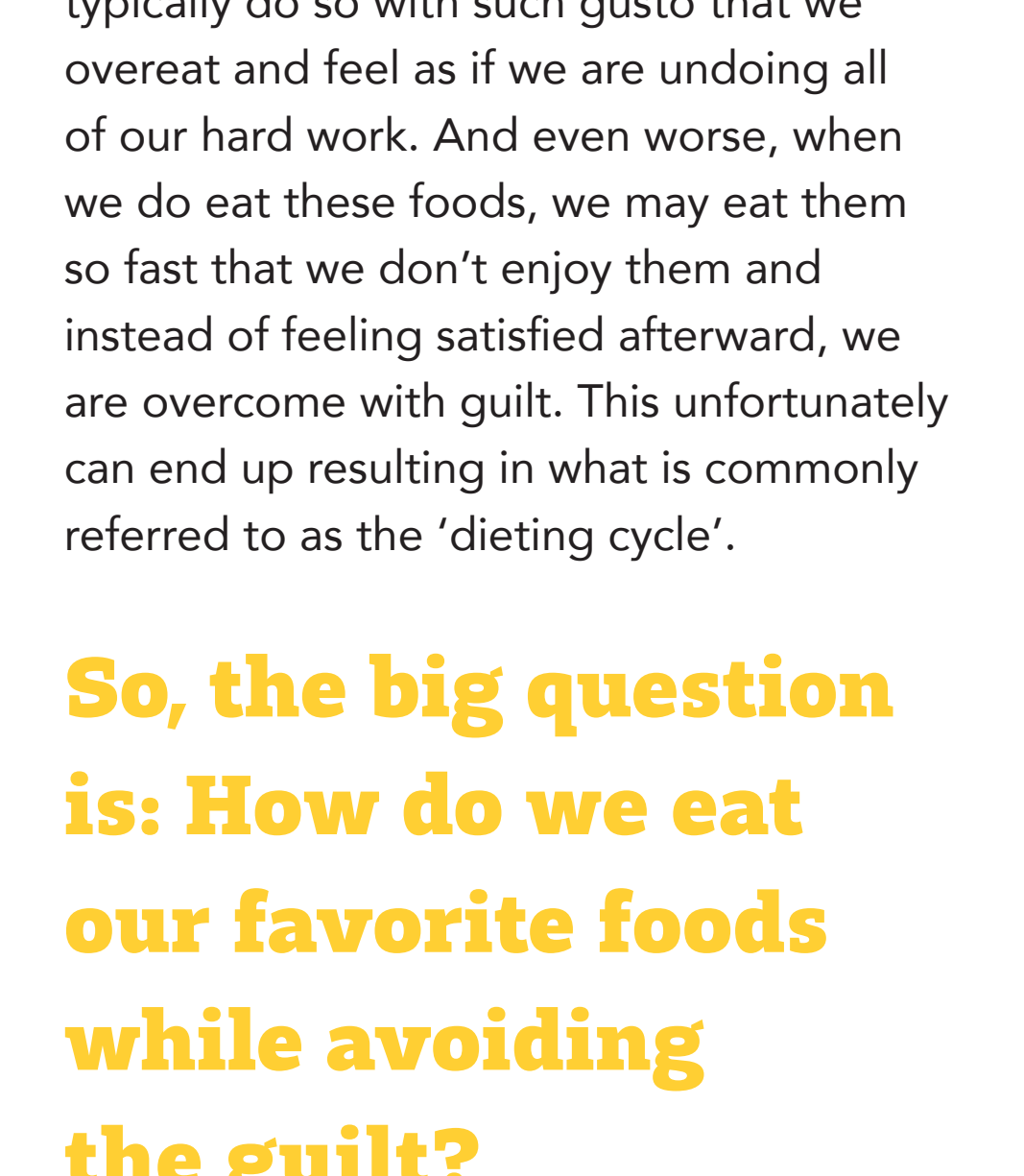
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Eating is a pleasurable and satisfying experience - at least it should be!

However, so often it can be a source of guilt, especially for those that are trying to watch their weight or stick to a set of strict 'food rules'.

Whether it's Easter eggs or your mum's homemade feijoa crumble, most of us usually have at least one favorite food. Often these foods are attached to special celebrations and we can be deeply emotionally attached to them. Our favorite foods often not only taste delicious, but they may also conjure up memories and feelings of happiness, comfort, and togetherness. However, sometimes to lose weight or follow a certain set of 'food rules', it is these favorite foods that we may try and cut out or ban from our diet. And this is what makes 'dieting' so hard!

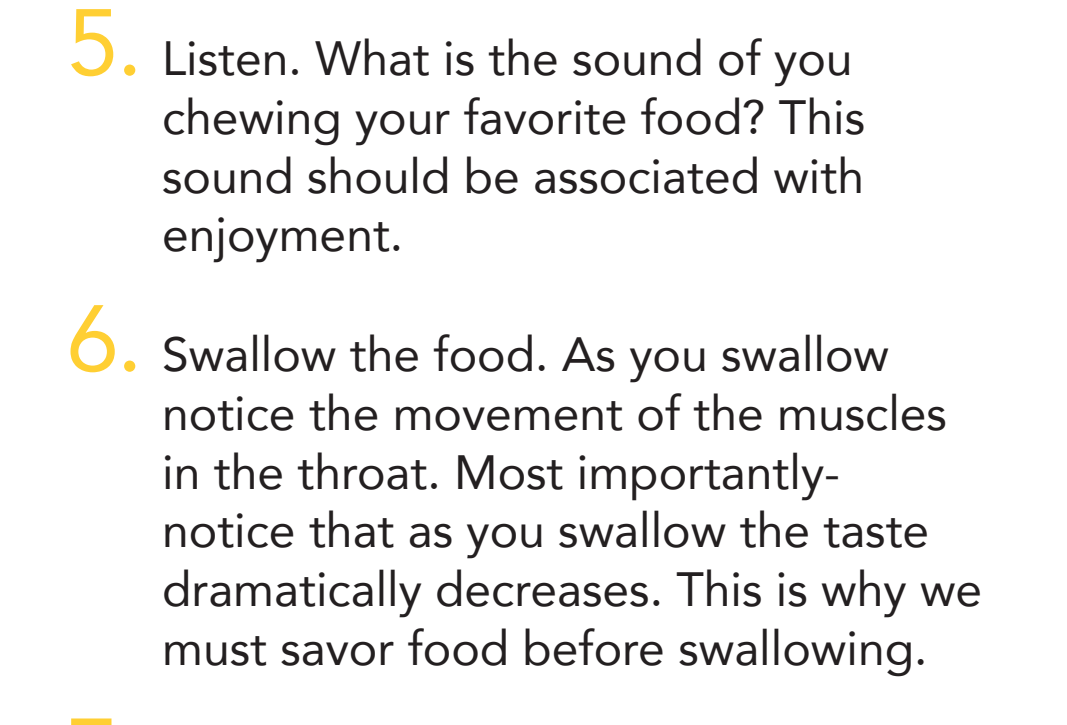


When we are deprived of our favorite foods, we tend to crave them even more than usual. When we reach a breaking point and give in to the craving, we typically do so with such gusto that we overeat and feel as if we are undoing all of our hard work. And even worse, when we do eat these foods, we may eat them so fast that we don't enjoy them and instead of feeling satisfied afterward, we are overcome with guilt. This unfortunately can end up resulting in what is commonly referred to as the 'dieting cycle'.

So, the big question is: How do we eat our favorite foods while avoiding the guilt?

The answer is, by allowing these foods in moderation and adopting a skill called mindful eating. Mindful eating is all about savoring and enjoying your favorite foods. By tasting more, you end up eating less.

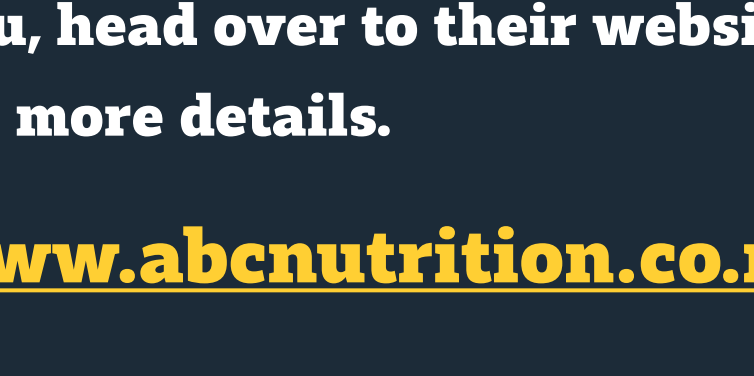
Mindful eating



1. Get yourself one of your favorite foods. The more decadent the better.
2. Look at the food. What is the texture like? Look at the edges. Turn the food around and view it from all angles.
3. Smell the food. Suck up the smell. How would you describe the aroma?
4. Bite off a small piece. Don't chew it straight away- notice how it feels in your mouth. Leave it on your tongue for a bit. Ok, so now you can chew it. Is it crunchy and rough or soft and smooth? Now notice the flavors. How many flavors can you taste? Which are the strongest?
5. Listen. What is the sound of you chewing your favorite food? This sound should be associated with enjoyment.
6. Swallow the food. As you swallow notice the movement of the muscles in the throat. Most importantly- notice that as you swallow the taste dramatically decreases. This is why we must savor food before swallowing.
7. Finish the food. SLOWLY. Break between mouthfuls. Truly enjoy it.
8. Most people find that if they can eat this way, it is much easier to stop at a small amount, as opposed to binging on the 'forbidden' food.

Think of your favorite foods- you may have possibly tried (and failed) to cut these out before. Now you need to change your mindset. Instead of banning these foods, allow yourself to have a small amount whenever you desire them. For example, if chocolate is your downfall, try having a only few pieces of decadent chocolate when you feel the urge. Use mindful eating to savor the chocolate. With time you will notice that the cravings subside, the guilt disappears and the binging ceases.

At ABC Nutrition we don't believe in banning any foods, Easter eggs and hot cross buns included. All foods can be included in a healthy eating pattern. It's just we need more of some and less of others. So go forth, enjoy and savor every delicious mouthful of your hot cross buns and Easter eggs this Easter.



To find out how ABC Nutrition's experienced dietitians can help you, head over to their website for more details.

www.abcnutrition.co.nz