**Conversation Starters**

“Practicing eating in a mindful way is more than seeing what and how much you eat. It is learning to welcome the thoughts that are present when you eat. This process of opening up can profoundly change the taste of the bite. At times you may realize it is your thoughts that are actually flavoring the meal.”

_Megrette Fletcher MEd, RD, CDE_

_Thoughts That Flavor the Meal, Food for Thought_

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**Conversation Starters**

“Generosity is an important aspect of creating a healthy relationship with food, as well as being an essential part of mindfulness. Practicing generosity is especially useful for sensitive people with food issues who find it difficult to express emotions - and who give too much to others while neglecting their own need.”

_Donald Altman, MA_

_Joy of Generosity, Food for Thought_

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**Conversation Starters**

“Mindfulness asks that we don’t ignore or pretend angry feelings don’t exist. Mindfulness means turning toward them even when that’s difficult.”

_Char Wilkins, MSW, LCSW_

_No Quick Fix, Food for Thought_

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**Conversation Starters**

“Loneliness may be one of the biggest causes of emotional eating. Sometimes, it’s difficult to know that this emotion is even the culprit. If you often eat when alone, or even avoid eating with others and prefer to remain isolated, loneliness has to be considered as one of the usual suspects that results in unbalanced eating behavior. If you eat when lonely or bored, then loneliness is eating at you.”

_Donald Altman, MA_

_The Healing Power of Compassion, Food for Thought_
**Conversation Starters**

“Gratitude packs a powerful punch. It is strong enough to reduce depression and produce happiness.”

*Donald Altman, MA*

*Spice Your Food with Gratitude, Food for Thought*

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**Conversation Starters**

“Satiety is the level of satisfaction a person has after eating. This is different than fullness which is referring to the physical weight or volume of food in the stomach.”

*Megrette Fletcher MEd, RD, CDE*

*Satiety and Fullness, Food for Thought*

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**Conversation Starters**

“The bottom line is that our knowledge about food, health and everything else is imperfect, incomplete and ever changing...When something does seem compelling and convincing, keep in mind that there is a middle ground between the extremes of all or nothing.”

*Ronald Thebarge, PhD*

*Are We Consuming Food or Information? Food for Thought*

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**Conversation Starters**

“Giving yourself permission to have chocolate isn’t the same as “giving in” or “giving up”. Permission is a mindful agreement with yourself to allow yourself a favorite food. This requires slowing down, acknowledging feelings, sensations and thoughts, exploring choices, and making decisions. This process is very different from mindless behaviors on autopilot.”

*Charles Wilkins, MSW, LCSW*

*The Power of Permission, Food for Thought*
**Conversation Starters**

“Staying in the moment with that particular experience [is the intention of mindfulness]. When this is done with the experience of eating, the experience changes. Attention is brought to the act of eating, to the pleasure, the satisfaction, to the subtle shifts as hunger is overlaid with fullness, to the choice of one more bite - or not.”

Jean Kristeller, PhD
*Being in the Moment, Food for Thought*

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“You may notice that once you have satisfied your acute hunger, the taste of food changes. It may still taste good; however, the amount of enjoyment you receive from each bite is less and less until finally eating is no longer pleasurable. In fact, eating past a comfortable level of fullness becomes painful, both physically and emotionally.”

Megrette Fletcher MEd, RD, CDE
*Finding Fullness, Food for Thought*

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“Staying present is a life jacket, a touchstone, a centering force, helping you get back up. When you take a moment and ask questions, you often find hidden strength. You realize that sure, this setback was hard, but you can deal with it. The ability to eat more mindfully does not automatically make darker thoughts and difficult problems disappear. The ability to eat mindfully helps you accept these thoughts and problems and to continue to “get up” even when they are present.”

Megrette Fletcher MEd, RD, CDE
*The Fourth Step, Food for Thought*

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“What pausing helps us do is to take a moment to step back and reflect on all the various possibilities before us. The ability to pause is like having a braking system in your car. Putting on the brakes gives you time to consider better options when you might otherwise simply react or act out of habit.”

Donald Altman, MA
*Pausing Practice: Your Natural Braking System, Food for Thought*
Conversation Starters
“The concept of weight loss may be a set-up for failure. Immediately, the idea of a “loss” is front and center. This implies a loss of a favorite food and ingrained habits and a subtle sense of deprivation can set in even before getting started.”
Brian M. Shelley, MD
Right Eating, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters
“Acceptance means you can watch whatever is happening in your life with an open heart and an open mind.”
Donald Altman, MA
Finding Acceptance, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters
“Let your craving prompt curiosity rather than an immediate reaction. Left to follow its own path, craving is shown to have a beginning, a point of peak intensity, and a moment when it subsides, just like a wave. By practicing awareness and observation we can ride the wave with no desperate attempt to to either direct it or escape it.”
Ronald Thebarge, PhD
Turning Your Crave into A Wave, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters
“Eating is such a significant part of our daily lives, yet it’s so easy to be disconnected from it. In one moment, our plates are full, and in another, completely empty. What happened? We hardly tasted or consciously enjoyed even one bite. We can changes this mechanical way of eating by establishing a daily mindful eating practice.”
Ronna Kabatznick, PhD
How To Set Up A Daily Mindful Eating Practice, Food for Thought
Conversation Starters

“So when you are eating or shopping take a moment and let yourself look with “fresh eyes” at the abundance and variety that is before you. Ask yourself: is the eye catching colors helping me make a choice or is it filling me with fear that my usual choice isn’t good enough?”

Donald Altman, MA
Shopping Mindfully, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters

“There is tremendous power in bringing our body and mind together. It helps us see that we have a choice: We can actually taste and experience what we’re eating, or we can eat unskillfully and miss the whole thing entirely.”

Ronni Kabanetz, PhD
How To Set Up A Daily Mindful Eating Practice, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters

“When we remember to notice the aftereffects of eating, we create continuity of awareness that may help us be more fully present the next time we eat. Mindful eating includes observing the feelings of one moment giving rise to the next, and one meal finishing, then soon another beginning.”

Dharmasharini Amala
Full Circle Awareness, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters

“There is benefit in catching problems early. The ability to see a problem when it is small, only a stitch, is the mindfulness skill of observation in action. When this skill is applied to eating, the so-called stitch, is a bite, a meal or a few days instead of months, years or decades of destructive eating.”

Megrette Fletcher MEd, RD, CDE,
The Fourth Step, Food for Thought
Conversation Starters

“One way to understand mindful eating is to imagine your awareness as a spotlight. The spotlight represents where your mind really is at any given moment. Shine the spotlight of awareness on the bite.”

Megrette Fletcher MEd, RD, CDE

“Curiosity and fear typically don’t coexist. When we are curious about something, fear recedes. When fear emerges, our curiosity usually becomes unavailable to use. They are like a seesaw. Since fear and anxiety are common barriers to mindfulness around food, curiosity is a tool to help us stay on track.”

Molly Kellogg RD, LCSW
A Curious Stance, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters

“As you prepare to exit the meal, slow down after each bite and check in continuously with your belly. The ability to recognize the absence of hunger is enhanced by slowing down at mealtime, reducing eating distractions, and intentionally noticing and rating current physical sensations like fullness.”

Megrette Fletcher MEd, RD, CDE
Finding Fullness, Food for Thought

“Giving is part of forgiveness. When we give, we make an offering to ourselves and to others, creating a willingness to make peace with the conflict and pain that fuels our anger, resentment, and bitterness.”

Ronna Kabatzhick PhD
Forgiveness Meditation, Food for Thought
Conversation Starters

“Our feelings about food are as varied as seasonings from around the world and as ever present as our breath. They accompany every aspect of our interaction with food and are linked to the broader field of our life experience thought associations of time and place, such as a feeling of craving that may arise with the aroma of apple pie, which we link with “home” and something “special”.

Dharmacharini Amala
Full Circle Awareness, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters

“As you are eating, become aware of the thoughts flying through your head — notice them, but do not indulge them or give in to them. Simply let them rise and fall without becoming ensnared by them.”

Rebecca Gladding, MD
The Perils of Multitasking, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters

“Habits are patterns of behavior that we learn to do with little attention. It is a wonder and gift that our brains are capable of developing habits. However, when we rely on them too much, habits rob us of choice.”

Molly Kellogg RD, LCSW
Choosing Your Way to Mindfulness, Food for Thought

Conversation Starters

“When we engage in mindful eating, everything slows down. When we stop to notice our food, what it tastes like, what it smells like, its texture and so on, we are much more likely to notice if we are amped up, stressed or running on autopilot in a rather directionless way.”

Rebecca Gladding, MD
The Perils of Multitasking, Food for Thought