

## Mind over eating®: A pilot study exploring behavior changes and trends

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**Background:** The Mind Over Eating® program emphasizes mindfulness, mind body therapies, and cognitive behavioral techniques to support obese individuals who are planning bariatric surgery. The program covers areas such as food knowledge, food addiction, stress management, spirituality, and lifestyle modification to initiate changes in behavior and weight loss. The purpose of our study was to explore the effectiveness of Mind Over Eating® on overall lifestyle behaviors and weight loss.

**Methods:** We conducted a retrospective study to determine the effectiveness of the 12-week preoperative Mind Over Eating® program. Pre and post questionnaire data were collected from 22 individuals who participated in the Mind Over Eating® program from January 2011 to July 13, 2011.

**Results:** The mean weight at the start of the program was 325 lbs. (SD 71.76), with a final weight of 286 lbs (p=.002, SD 56.8). Significant gains were found in the areas of improved nutritional knowledge, mindful eating, and participation in meaningful activities. Water intake increased (p=.006) while soda intake decreased (p=.001). Eating a protein source with each meal increased from 40.9% to 90.9% (p=.001). Participants reported eating meals more slowly (p=.015). Fast food intake decreased (p=.005). At the end of the program participants reported a significant change in their participation in meaningful activities with all of the participants reporting that they engaged in a meaningful activity at least once a month (p=.007).

**Conclusions:** The Mind Over Eating® program showed positive trends in weight loss, nutritional knowledge, eating patterns and behavior, and participation in meaningful activities. Mind Over Eating's® foundation in mind-body connection positions it as a valuable tool in assisting people struggling with obesity and increasing success for bariatric patients.

### Biography

Rachel Handley has wide-ranging professional training and experience in psychotherapy, social work, bariatric counseling, crisis counseling, as well as drug and alcohol counseling. From hospitals to public sector to major firms and medical clinics, Rachel has helped numerous overweight individuals finally get off the roller coaster of frustration and failure. As Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of Lifestyle 2 Wellness LLC and the Mind Over Eating Program, Rachel is instrumental in providing behavioral assessments and counseling via a strategic approach that combines the concepts of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Solution Focus Therapy, Transactional Analyses Therapy, Group Therapy, Stress Management techniques, Relapse Prevention techniques, and guided imagery and meditation techniques to assist each member with long-term behavioral change. Rachel is a member of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

Prudence Ticknor is a registered dietician, mind-body practitioner and health and wellness coach. She has more than ten years of experience in developing local, countywide and national nutritional and wellness programs for schools, institutions, corporations and medical practices. As Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Mind Over Eating program and the Lifestyle 2 Wellness LLC, Prudence utilizes her skills and extensive bariatric background to assist individuals get to the heart of their problems relating to foods and overeating. Practicing the art of mindful eating, Ticknor's keen insight into understanding her clients' mindset and everyday challenges emanates from her personal experience and struggles with obesity as a child and young adult. Prudence is a member of the American Dietetic Association (ADA), Center for Mindful Eating, and the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS).

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