

# Don't diet; reconnect with food, expert recommends

**D**o you use food as a comfort measure, or starve yourself to numb painful emotions? Maybe, like me, you're often "too busy" to eat right and you wolf down a handful of nacho chips or Girl Scout cookies without even thinking about it. Well, it's time to eat "mindfully," and Huntington Woods resident Beverly Price can teach you how.

A registered dietitian, exercise physiologist, and registered yoga teacher, Price recently released a DVD, "Reconnect with Food ... Unplugged," based on her unique yoga, meditation and conscious-eating program that helps people make changes in their relationships with food from the inside out. Sessions

begin with an hour of yoga practice.

"Yoga teaches us to be mindful," said Price, who works with clients one-on-one or in group sessions. "I tell people, place your foot here, place your hands there, so they're aware of what they're doing. They can translate that mindfulness into how they're eating. "They can say, 'I'm not going to zone out, I'm going to really zone in and pay attention to how much I'm eating when I'm hungry, and I'm going to stop when I'm full.' That's what mindful eating is all about," she said. "It's also paying attention to taste, smell, texture of food, and the quality and quantity of food."

Price explained that yoga can change the body's biochemistry and help to prevent "stress fat."

"When we're breathing from our chest we're creating the fright and flight mechanism which causes our body chemistry to go into fat storage mode," she explained. "When



Learn to eat mindfully and overcome addictive food behaviors with nutritionist and yoga teacher Beverly Price.

we're breathing deeply from our diaphragm than we're creating a different kind of chemistry in our body where we can use energy from food vs. storing it.

"We can have the healthiest diet under the sun but if we're stressed we can actually gain

weight," she said.

DVD viewers can take part in the yoga session and then examine their own feelings, thoughts and motives as they watch the one-hour sharing and support component of the program that, like the yoga segment, involves several of Price's clients. The participants talk about their struggles with food, body image and emotions. For one client, eating is a form of entertainment. For another, food is comfort and a way to avoid relationships. One client deals with bulimia while another feels that binge eating has control over her life.

"People really learn a lot from each other and they're focusing on listening rather than just thinking about themselves," said Price, who insists that participants not comment on one another's issues because they might unintentionally say something that could be hurtful.

"I've had people in the group

who really aren't ready to let go of the drama in their lives, and either I have to defuse it or the group defuses it. One woman said, 'The program got me out of my victim mode.'"

Journaling is also a part of Price's holistic approach to healing eating disorders. DVD viewers are encouraged to write down their thoughts as they watch the support session.

"When someone comes to see me privately they read their journal to me. They can reflect on it and then they can see what's going on," Price said. "If they haven't tapped into the physical, emotional, spiritual, I help them do that, either in the session or by sharing it in the group."

Many people who've come to Price for nutrition counseling and yoga therapy have already tried different diets without achieving success.

"I find that many health professionals are telling their clients what to do and that's

not very helpful," she said. "I don't tell my clients what to do. They know what's best for them, and I try to help them recognize that. That's where the mindfulness component comes in. When they start becoming aware, they can move forward to change and become more accepting of themselves."

Price is doing a book and DVD signing, 7-9 p.m., Saturday, March 29, at Barnes & Noble, 500 S. Main St. in Royal Oak. She is co-author of the book, *Nutrition Secrets for Optimal Health*. A seven-week "Reconnect with Food" support series, 7-9 p.m. Wednesdays, April 2 through May 14, will be held at First Baptist Church in Royal Oak. To register and for more information, visit [www.reconnectwithfood.com](http://www.reconnectwithfood.com) or call (248) 390-4150.

Eat mindfully and send your Around Town news to Diana Wing at [rotown@ameritech.net](mailto:rotown@ameritech.net).