

Elevating Employee Mood Gastronomically an Innovative Solution for HR

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Abstract-Human Resources are assets for any organization. Management should provide a congenial environment to the work force. Organizations generally motivate their employees by providing monetary benefits, modifying the working atmosphere - both physical & psychological etc. Most of these factors are external and we unknowingly neglect one factor i.e. food. Though we consider healthy diet for wellbeing but very rarely accept them as a mood elevator. Right combination of super diet at the suitable time can work wonders on the mood of the employees. The food we take in our everyday life, has all the hidden potentials to elevate the mood. We need to identify them and combine them in the menu of the employees. In ancient days considerable amount of research was carried out in India and also in China about food and its effect on human body which is reflected in Indian Ayurved and Chinese Traditional Medicines. If properly studied and implemented, we may get practical benefits out of these concepts in modern days too. On a survey it is noticed that employee mood elevation concept through food is neglected in the industry. This research paper is a preliminary approach towards practical implementation of Mood Elevating Food in the daily diet of employees.

Keywords-Employee Motivation, Mood Elevating Food, Ayurved, Traditional Chinese Medicine.

I. INTRODUCTION

“Food was 3-day old; Hunger was 4-day old. Poor man ate that food peacefully because food was 1-day fresher than hunger”. A quote that rightly displays the importance of food for existence. Food, from time immemorial has been the basic necessity of life. However, it is time for each one of us to ponder a little on whether eating food is just a tummy filling, tongue enthralling experience or something beyond it!

Relating food with human behavior is an area of research. In practical world we can take the help of these concepts to create a favourable situation in handling human force in an organization.

Selecting right people is a challenge for HR. But it is more challenging to retain good employees in the organization. Activities should be planned in such way so that the employees get constant motivation along with visible benefits. Action for resolving staff grievances & complaints should be considered as the last possible solution because these methods are like fire-fighting. It is always better to provide employees a good working environment, be it tangible or intangible.

II. OBJECTIVE

Objective of this research paper is to devise a tool for enhancing the mood of the employees in an organization. As food is an integral part of our everyday life, gastronomical approach with an essence of traditional concepts, is chosen for the mood enhancement & the possibilities are explored.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Importance is given on the observation and experiences gathered over past two decades. Informal interviews in the form of general conversations with various industry professionals supplied lots of information. Secondary data available from various journals, research papers, magazines, newspapers, media reports and websites are also utilized. The data collected are processed and the findings are further analyzed to support the final results & opinions.

IV. LIMITATIONS & SCOPE OF STUDY

In today's global scenario, employees come from different regions & culture. Their food habits vary a lot. Religious diversity makes the situation more complex. So, formulating a simple solution, to fit all, would be a very difficult task and may be next to impossible. However, keeping all these odd barriers in mind, choices are considered for suitable solutions. Scientific approach about the nutrients and their effects, combined with traditional beliefs, can guide for better solutions related to human mood enhancement. Physiological, Psychological & Philosophical thoughts supported with observations of various cases may reveal new dimensions in mood elevation.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

On searching, many research papers related to food and its effect on human body were found. Effect of food on brain or nervous system were also a part of them. Many authors concluded that food has its influence on human mood. Scientific experiment, survey and research revealed the key elements responsible for such effects. Some of the findings are included in the following reviews.

Bonnie J. Spring et al (1986) have experimented and concluded that mental alertness is lower following a

carbohydrate than a protein lunch and protein rich food has a greater control over human mood compared to others.

Harvey P. Weingarten et al (1990) has explained that desire for specific foods represents one of the most common and intense experiences surrounding eating. It is also noted that cravings serve to identify food redress bodily needs.

Prasad, C. (1998) stated that serotonin, one of the neurotransmitters which influences our mood, is produced inside brain from protein tryptophan with the help of carbohydrate.

Oliver and Wardle (1999) found that people consume more of snack-type foods during the situation under stress. On the other hand, "meal-type" foods are less consumed during stressful period.

Robert E. Thayer (2003) has emphasized on emotional eating & its effect. He explained that when people are under stress, they decline towards unhealthy food which gives instant energy for a short while.

Chunhong Liu et al (2007) analyzed through their experiment and survey among the college students of China and found that frequency of consumption of fresh fruit, is inversely proportional to the stress level.

Ennest K. J. Powel et al (2008) has stated that the replacement of omega-3 fatty acid by other fatty acids has resulted in depressive disorder in developed countries.

Jacquelyn H. Flaskerud (2015) observed that the relationship between mood and food is complex. He noticed that mood can influence the foods we choose to eat. When stressed, overeating is a common reaction.

Preetam Sarkar et al (2015) explored the diversity in traditional health foods of India. In their research paper it is stated that the regional health foods have evolved according to the climate, culture, and cropping practices of a particular region.

Christina Riachi (2016) found that carbohydrates trigger the release of serotonin in the brain when combined with protein. Carbohydrates also increase the glucose level in the blood which is responsible for mood enhancement.

VI. PHILOSOPHICAL & TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO RELATE MOOD WITH FOOD

In this section conclusion of the research work should be explained. Historical observations revealed that in ancient times mostly research took place in the oriental countries compared to occidental. India and China had rich Philosophical concepts, which till date in both places are followed with equal devotion. Ayurved, the science of medicine, was developed in India about 3000 years ago and in China around the same time Yin-Yang concept was

developed which was reinforced by TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine).

a. Indian Philosophy & Traditions

India is a land of diversity in all regards. Topographical features, water resources, soil types & climatic conditions govern both natural vegetation and cultivation of a region. Depending on the raw materials produced, the food habits are developed by the habitants. Climatic condition, local culture and the religion influence the food choices of the people of a region. Considering the variations, learned persons in ancient India formulated different suitable meal plans for the dwellers of these regions.

Ayurved - Indian Gastronomic Sciences

Till the end of the last century, for an international traveler, Indian food was considered as an unhealthy option. The way the spices and oils are combined in Indian exotic cooking styles, were beyond the knowledge of most of the foreigners. With the development of internet and due to globalization, information about the benefits of Indian food, including its ingredients and cooking style, are becoming popular among the foreigners. India's culinary heritage is guided with Ayurved. In the ancient books of Ayurved, like Charak Samhita, Susrut Samhita etc. there are separate sections describing the benefits of different foods and their usages. These knowledges related to food and their link to health benefits were observed, tested and finally documented. In our country the knowledge of Indian gastronomic science is followed for generations as a part of Ayurved or as customs in our rich cultural heritage. Diversity of ingredients used in Indian cuisine has made it flavourful and enriched health benefits.

According to Vedic concept there are three types of Bhojan or food categories Saatvik, Raajasik and Tamasik. Out of these three Saatvik-Bhojan is very simple, consists of only vegetable items without any spices or roots. This category of food also includes fruits, nuts and milk. These were formulated considering the calm and peaceful after effect of the food on the human body and mind. Learned persons, free from external temptations, with full control on their mind and body, generally choose Saatvik-Bhojan and found to be happy.

Raajasik-Bhojan was designed for the food lovers. Beside Saatvik-Bhojan items, this category includes all kinds of vegetables, onion, garlic, fried food etc. and are enriched with spices. These ingredients stimulate brain and supply good amount of energy to the body. Excess of such food may lead to insomnia, restlessness, anxiety, anger etc. Raajasik food increases never ending desires. So, the person having Raajasik-Bhojan becomes unhappy as their expectations are not fulfilled.

Tamasik-Bhojan contains all types of food items including non-vegetables. Generally, these foods contain too much

of oil, sweets, spices etc. Such foods generate excessive desire and negative energy within the body. As a result, people who consume Tamasik food regularly, develop a tendency to be engaged in anti-social activities. According to Vedic food rules, reheating, use of chemicals, stale food etc. are also considered under Tamasik category. At present days, our food consumption habits turn Saatvik and Raajasik foods into Tamasik food. Due to our so-called modern living styles, we reheat food, use different types of chemicals like preservatives, colouring&flavouring agents, emulsifier, stabilizer etc. Packaged food contains most of these and its use is increasing day-by-day to achieve professional targets within limited time frame. Thus, slowly we are shifting to Tamasik food unknowingly even though we are vegetarian.

Beside the types of food, other factors like time, quantity etc. have important role in assimilation of the nutrients and its effect in the body. Biological clock within our body is synchronized with day & night cycle. Food which provides energy should be taken in the morning, so that the energy can be utilized in the day's activities. Similarly, if stimulating food is taken before sleep, it would not be possible for the body to take proper rest.

Food can elevate mood provided it is consumed with a free mind having no negative thought. A food packed with nutrients may not be considered nutritious if it is not tasty and if we do not like it. So, keeping this in mind one may consider Raajasik food or even Tamasik food more helpful than Saatvik food at times.

The following simple Vedic rules related to food are applicable for proper assimilation of the nutrients within our body :

1. Food selection as per the need of the body. Also consider weather, climate and geographic location.
2. Use local & seasonal ingredients. Prefer variety for getting all nutrients.
3. Homemade food prepared hygienically with peaceful mind is preferred.
4. Ensure breakfast which gives full energy in the beginning of the day.
5. Meals to be taken when the previous one is digested.
6. Washing hands face and feet or better taking bath before meal have soothing effect on mind and body. After the meal is over one should again wash mouth, face, eyes, hands and feet.
7. Observe, concentrate and praise about your food. Food should be consumed with positive mental state. Stress, anger etc. would lead to indigestion of the food.

8. Eating should be at moderate speed and food should be chewed properly. Speaking should be avoided while eating.

9. Drink sufficient water at correct time.

10. There should be a gap of about two hours between dinner and sleeping time.

In Ayurved each ingredient is judged according to its chemical composition and its effect on the body. Age, gender, environment, time etc. are also taken into consideration. While various ingredients are combined, care is taken so that they do not react with each other and diminish the nutritive value or develop any toxin within the body of the consumer. Ayurved guides us on the basis of nature of food, digestive time inside our body, reaction with different types of food and also about the time of consumption.

Few combinations which sounds very healthy, may create health hazards when consumed. Very often we combine them considering a healthy option. These may have a great taste but Ayurved suggests something else. Care should be taken not to combine them in the meal. Some examples are as listed below :

- Banana & Milk: Calcium of milk prevents absorption of Iron from banana
- Tomato & Cucumber: Tomato is acidic whereas cucumber is alkaline. Hence not digested properly when consumed together.
- Pasta & Minced Meat: Starch requires alkaline digestive environment whereas protein requires acidic. So, when taken together, both the items remain undigested and results in heartburn, gas, belching etc. In case of Indian food, we get similar combination with Biriyani, Meat Curry & Rice etc. Meat can be combined with non-starchy vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, beans, zucchini etc.
- Meat & Cheese: Meat contains iron & zinc which are not absorbed when combined with cheese due to presence of calcium. One can have both separately with suitable vegetables.
- Cheese, Pasta & Tomato creates some delicacies in Italian cuisine but according to Ayurved they should not be combined. Protein in cheese, carbohydrate in pasta requires different environment for digestion.
- Milk should never be combined with onion, brinjal, banana, pineapple, jackfruit, sour fruits, melon, meat, fish & salt.
- Curd should not be consumed with banana, kiwi, pineapple (enzyme in kiwi & pineapple decomposes milk protein), most fruits, meat, fish and also Urad Dal (unfortunately Dahi-vara requires both).

- According to Ayurved Honey & Ghee should not be combined. Honey should never be cooked.
- Fruits & Vegetables have different digestive time. Hence, they should not be taken together.

Following the above rules may lead to Saatvik-Bhojan but with little alterations and modifications we can design a palatable and healthy diet. These simple rules of Ayurved can help in assimilation of the food consumed, in much easier way within our body without any ill effect.

b. Chinese Philosophy & Traditions

Chinese Philosophy is rich in concepts and considered to be followed since last 2500 years. Confucianism, Daoism etc. were accepted like religions in China. Yin-Yang & Bogua became a part of life of the Chinese. Effects of these are noticed in food, medicine, culture & education of China.

TCM - Traditional Chinese Medicine

Feelings are viewed as one of the major interior reason for malady in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) as well as other Eastern philosophies aimed at the wellbeing of human health. TCM includes five pairs of organs and the five elements.

1. Fire - Heart and Small Intestine
2. Earth - Spleen and Stomach
3. Metal - Lungs and Large Intestine
4. Water - Kidney and Bladder
5. Wood - Liver and Gallbladder

It states that maintaining a balance between these two groups is essential for healthy living. Each organ has a sensorial and enthusiastic segment. Suwen (The Book of Plain Questions), one of the hypothetical fundamental books of Traditional Chinese Medicine, says: "The five yin-organs of the human body deliver five sorts of basic qi (pronounced as chi), which deliver bliss, outrage, anguish, stress, and dread." TCM likewise trusts that specific organs are identified with enthusiastic exercises, like the heart is identified with bliss, the liver to outrage, the spleen to contemplation, the lungs to nervousness and the kidneys to fear.

Our human body is perfectly capable of maintaining optimum health and balance provided we listen to the messages it gives us. The messages are in the form of craving desires for certain kinds of foods. Our body actually communicates with us via our taste buds. The 5 pairs correspond to 5 tastes i.e. Spleen and Stomach to Sweetness, Kidney to Salty, Lungs to Spicy, Heart to Bitter and Liver to Sour. Straightaway we can relate these craving agents to TCM Wisdom for e.g. the essence of salt enhances the kidney function and sweet flavor increases

the functioning of the stomach. Thus, we find ourselves craving for certain kinds of foods sometimes.

Excessive consumption of meat, cheese and eggs can cause abundant yang property in body that can cause poor performance, which indirectly tends to show the improper assimilation and excessive excretion. As per Rik Vermuyten, (Rik Vermuyten:2017) a clinical scientist, has come out with a proper experiment that manifested the link between the actual demand and the psychological demand of a specific nutrients, thus due to absence of adjusting capacity of lungs and other digestive organs or even mood or physical conditions may affect the entire process.

'Yin-Yang' to Food & Mood - A Chinese philosophical approach

As we are concerned about Yin-Yang approach towards food and mood a major importance lies on the identification of state of hunger; once we are able to differentiate the emotional hunger and appetite, we can easily reach to our needs which caused craving, will be easy to break away the evil traits and to adopt healthy (yang) approaches to wards betterment. Thus, we can draw the clear distinction between various types of hunger and appetite, are:

1. Emotional or irrational hunger is based on the current state of mind,
2. Polyphagia is also a kind of (in the extreme state hunger)
3. Appetite is something else, which derives from metabolism,

It is considered that each element is either Yin or Yang. Within main dominating quality, a small amount of opposite character is also hiding. It is believed that character of each person is dominated by either Yin or Yang qualities. Similarly, most of food items (ingredients) are categorized having yin or yang qualities. To get a balanced situation, food items should be chosen depending upon the character of the person and considering other factors of the environment. Yang food generally creates warmth within the body & Yin foods have cooling effect. Dry cooking methods like roasting, grilling, frying etc. increase yang quality of the food. Food cooked in these methods requires more energy to digest and they also heats up the body. Poaching, steaming, boiling etc. supplies heat through water. These methods impart yin quality within the food. Food cooked in these methods are digested easily and generally have cooling effect.

Some of the food categories with their Yin-Yang qualities are stated below (Table-1) :

TABLE 1. YIN-YANG QUALITIES OF FOOD

Food Categories	Yin-Yang Character
Fruits & Berries	Mostly Yin
Nuts & Seeds	Mostly Yang
Vegetables	Both types. Preferences should be given on seasonal vegetables
Complex Carbohydrate	Mostly Yin
Herbs & Spices	Mostly Yang
Dairy Products	Mostly Yin
Non-Veg Items	Mostly Yang
Fats & Oils	Mostly Yang
Stimulating Foods	Mostly Yang

Considering the above accepted beliefs of TCM, we can design a diet for an individual depending on the factors like gender, characteristics, environment, location & time. When effect of all these are neutralized with qualities of rightly chosen food, an equilibrium is created which sets the body & mood of the person.

VII. MODERN GASTRONOMICAL APPROACH

In present days every organization has its own methods of motivating the staffs. Generally, we can identify the following actions in this regard:

Being Transparent : Development & goal of the organization are stated clearly to the employees and also explained about the related future possible gains in personal level. Thus, the employee can relate themselves with the development of the organization and would perform for own benefit.

Showing Bigger Picture : The dream of the organization is projected and the employee gets the bigger picture. Small tasks are given to be completed within target time frame. The link between the mission of the organization & the individual task completion with its importance is also explained. This creates a sense of belongingness.

Being Role-Model : The leader should be a role model and motivate the team through his body language, performance and behavior. When the team leader shows interest in the activities of the company, the team members automatically follow him.

Delegating Responsibility : Each employee should be given a chance to lead in different levels in sub-groups. The extra responsibility would develop a sense of dependency of the organization on the employee and the employee would understand his importance in the organization.

Rewards & Incentive : These always pay back in motivating employees. Rewards & Incentives may not be expensive, but the recognition the employees get, drive them a long way.

Motivating each person than the team: Respect each member of the team. When individually motivated, the result is more fruitful. The leader should identify the motivating factor of each member of the team.

Showing Trust and make them aware about it: The management should trust each members of the team & they should be made aware of this fact. This would develop a strong sense of bonding.

Prioritizing work-life balance : Employees should be given with enough free time to spend quality moments with their families. Thus, they would perform better even under pressure.

Working environment : Workingenvironment should be ergonomically designed. Sufficient light, ergonomic furniture, noise free zone, comfortable temperature are suitable for normal functioning. Soothing music, aromatherapy may be found to be beneficial.

Open-Door policy : Finally, if employee centered working is created and they are encouraged to express their feelings about the working policies and environment, in light of positive criticism, we may receive many innovative ideas to resolve various operating hazards.

Inside our body - Neurotransmitters & their role :

All of the above mentioned motivating strategies stimulate the employees from outside. When the management takes these actions, unknowingly they trigger the secretion of some hormones which influence the person emotionally and starts a series of biochemical reaction within human body. Scientists had already identified that hormones like Serotonin, Melatonin, Dopamine, Endorphins & Oxytocin, also called neurotransmitter, are directly related to enhancement of human mood. Thus, in the feeling of happiness, our Endocrine System & Central Nervous System are involved.

Most of these hormones or neurotransmitters are synthesized within human body and have effect on central nervous system. For their synthesis various Essential Amino Acids and other chemicals are required. Foods, rich in components like magnesium, tryptophan, vitamin-B complex, omega-3 fatty acid, iron etc. are considered for such activities and grouped as mood elevating food.

In the morning daylight & healthy breakfast help to generate serotonin. Walking, spending time in the nature, even smiling also boost serotonin. When we help someone, this neurotransmitter is generated. Serotonin increases positivity & relaxation. It gives us the feeling of energy boosting.

Melatonin is synthesized from Serotonin within the pineal gland of brain. Melatonin has direct connection with darkness and it regulates sleep cycle. So, during the sleep, dark room is essential for complete rest of brain and body.

During sleep restoration takes place within the body which is necessary for the activity of the next day.

Though Serotonin & Melatonin are of opposite nature, combined they are responsible for the balancing the activity & rest phases of our mind & body. So, we should increase Serotonin in the daytime and Melatonin at night.

Both Serotonin & Melatonin are synthesized from the same essential amino acid tryptophan. The stages involved are :

Tryptophan \Rightarrow 5-HTP \Rightarrow Serotonin \Rightarrow Melatonin

5-HTP (5-Hydroxytryptophan) is produced from the amino acid tryptophan through the action of the enzyme tryptophan hydroxylase which is one of the bipterin-dependent aromatic amino acid hydroxylases. 5-HTP is decarboxylated to serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine or 5-HT) by the enzyme aromatic-L-amino-acid decarboxylase with the help of vitamin-B6. This reaction occurs both in nervous tissue and in the liver. 5-HTP crosses the Blood-Brain-Barrier (BBB - It is a highly selective semipermeable membrane barrier that separates the circulating blood from the brain & extra cellular fluid in the central nervous system. It is formed by endothelial cells and it allows passage of water, some gasses and lipid soluble molecules by passive diffusion, as well as glucose and amino acids that are crucial to neural function.), while 5-HT does not.

Dopamine is synthesized from amino acid tyrosine. It sends signals to the nerve cells. There are many food sources for tyrosine, but Dopamine is released when we are appreciated for our actions may be at workplace or at home. It also motivates us towards our achievements like goals, desires, needs etc. We feel lack of enthusiasm when Dopamine level is low.

Certain foods like almonds, avocados, bananas, dairy products, lima beans, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds etc. are good sources of dopamine increasing tyrosine & L-Dopa. Dopamine cannot cross the BBB, whereas L-Dopa, the metabolic precursor of dopamine can. Non-essential amino acid tyrosine & essential amino acid Phenylalanine are converted into L-Dopa which after crossing BBB further synthesized into Dopamine inside the brain.

Phenylalanine \Rightarrow tyrosine \Rightarrow L-Dopa \Rightarrow Dopamine

As Dopamine is oxidized easily, antioxidants like fruits and vegetables should be consumed to protect dopamine-using neurons from free radical damage.

Endorphin is produced in the body during exercise. Within the brain it creates a pain reducing feeling. Thus, we ignore the pain & enjoy the exercise. This makes us happy. When we laugh, Endorphin is released. In working area relaxed environment may create similar situation and can makes the employees happy.

Oxytocin is released from the pituitary gland during intimacy between two individuals or group and acts as a potential antidepressant in humans. It improves the social behavior of a person. Sense of trust is also increased by this hormone. Beside other activities, this makes the bonding between male & female stronger.

Hospitality industry & some other good organizations provide quality staff meals free of cost or at a subsidized rate compared to the actuals in the market. When the employees get these benefits and their stomach is full, mentally they are satisfied. Thus, satiety also plays important role in mood elevation.

It is noticed that, though we are concerned about health and diet, but neglect the mood elevating food which may be included in the normal diet.

Common food that we consume every day, has some potentials which, if properly combined by designing a suitable menu according demographic factors, may be beneficial for the employees. Sometimes alteration in the ingredients may do wonders. Some of such foods are found in our daily diet, like egg, cheese, dark chocolate, meat, spirulina, sesame seed, sunflower seed, banana, etc. But generally, these are neglected due to lack of awareness or we take less than the optimum quantity. Hence, we never get the desired results.

Only the amino acids are not enough for synthesis of hormones or neurotransmitters. Many other nutrients play crucial roles in the activation process of these neurotransmitters. For mood elevation activities various nutrients are identified. Some acts as main resources, where others act as catalyst. Some of the nutrients protect the basic building blocks from free-radicals and some foods are responsible for steady supply of energy. Antioxidants, Vitamin-B Complex, Vitamin-C, Unsaturated Fats, Omega-3 Fatty Acids, Protein, Complex Carbohydrate, Iron, Magnesium, Zinc, Selenium etc. are in the top of the list. Recent studies revealed that Vitamin-D has some connections with working of Serotonin and thus may help to fight depression. Even Caffeine can play an important role in mood elevation. Food rich in these nutrients (Table-2) are to be combined in the diet along with the foods chosen for synthesizing the neurotransmitters. When a diet is planned, keeping all these nutrients in the meals, it may create wonder in human mind and body.

Nutrients required for Central Nervous System

Antioxidants:

Function – Combats toxins brought to brain by blood flow

Source – Leafy Greens, Berries, Avocado, Nuts & Seeds, Dark Chocolate

Vitamin B Complex:

Function – Antioxidant, maintain myelin, helps in metabolism of Amino acids, synthesis of Serotonin & Dopamine, prevents depression, improves mood & alertness, memory, supports immune system, production and maintenance of red blood cells, iron absorption

Source – Outer coating of Cereals, Leafy Greens, Beets, Beans, Lentils & Legumes, Broccoli, Asparagus, Orange, Papaya, Avocado and Tofu. Vitamin-B12 is found in fish, Red Meat, Eggs, Poultry, Milk, Milk Products & Soy Products

Vitamin C:

Function – Immune system, helps body to utilize iron, protects heart, powerful antioxidant

Source – Gooseberry, Kiwi, Papaya, Orange, Guava, Pineapple, Strawberry, Broccoli, Cabbage, Brussels Sprout, Spinach, Tomato, Bell Peppers

Tryptophan:

Function – Synthesis of serotonin

Source – Dark Chocolate, Egg, Oily Fish, Yogurt, Cheese, Tofu, Coriander, Nuts & Seeds, Pineapple, Banana, Avocado, Turmeric, Fermented food

Omega 3 Fatty Acids:

Function – Building blocks of the nerves, prevent blood clotting, increase cognition and learning, anti-inflammatory

Source – Seafood, Soybeans & Oil, Walnuts, Flax Seeds & Oil, Chia Seeds, Canola Oil

Unsaturated Fats:

Function – Increase blood flow to the brain, decrease risk of dementia, slow age-related brain deterioration

Source – Fish, Avocado, Oils

Iron:

Function – Main component for red blood cells - supplies oxygen to brain and other parts

Source – Spinach, Spirulina, Liver, Lentil, Quinoa Seed, Dark Chocolate, Black Beans, Raisin, Mint Leaves

Magnesium:

Function – Creation of ATP (adenosine triphosphate) for energy, formation of bones & teeth, relaxation of blood vessels, control blood sugar

Source – Seeds, Coriander, Almond, Cocoa

Zinc:

Function – Antioxidant, fight free-radical damage & depression, help immune system, treat diarrhoea, enhance nervous system

Source – Legumes, Nuts & Seeds, Whole Grain, Chickpea, Mushroom, Spinach, Kale, Dairy Products, Egg, Chicken, Shellfish, Meat, Dark Chocolate

Selenium:

Function – Presence of selenium increases brain function

Source – Brazil Nut, Whole-wheat products, Oatmeal, Beans, Brown Rice, Spinach, Sunflower Seeds, Tofu, Low-fat Milk products, Seafood, Meat, Poultry, Egg

Caffeine:

Function – Enhance - alertness, short-term memory and mental ability

Source – Coffee, Tea, Chocolate

From the above list we can identify the food sources rich in key elements for mood enhancement and having functions related to Central Nervous System (CNS). These include the followings:

Fruits–Avocado, Apple, Banana, Gooseberry, Kiwi, Guava, Pineapple, Cherry, Coconut, Raisin, Orange, Papaya, Black Grapes

Berries – Raspberry, Blueberry, Blackberry, Strawberry

Nuts – Almond, Brazil Nuts, Peanut, Cashew, Walnuts, Hazelnuts

Seeds – Chia Seed, Flax Seed, Pumpkin Seed, Sunflower Seed, Quinoa Seed

Vegetables – Asparagus, Celery stalks, Tomato, Bell Peppers, Sweet Potato, Mushroom

Green Leafy Vegetables – Spinach, Kale, Broccoli, Lettuce, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage

Herbs & Spices – Coriander, Basil, Mint, Onion, Ginger, Garlic, Fennel, Cinnamon, Star Anise, Cayenne Pepper, Chili, Black Pepper, Turmeric

Legumes– Lentils, Pease, Beans (Soybeans, Pinto-beans, Black-beans, Navy-beans, Kidney-beans)

Dairy products – Milk, Yoghurt, Cheese, (also Tofu)

Non-Veg items – Egg, Ham & Bacon, Red Meat, Chicken, Oily Fish, Oysters

Complex Carbohydrate – Whole-wheat Pastas & Bread, Oatmeal, Brown-rice

Stimulating Foods – Dark Chocolate, Tea, Green Tea, Coffee

Others – Honey, Betel leaf

Keeping the beneficial effect of the above super foods in mind, delicious recipes may be formulated. Following some simple guidelines, the meals for the day can be designed in such a way that the food value retains in the

final product and are absorbed in the body. Some of combinations are as mentioned below:

- Whole grain cereals + Milk + Berries + Nuts
- Fruits + Seeds + Nuts
- Buckwheat Pancake + Honey
- Curd Rice
- Fruit Salad with lemon & honey dressing
- Yoghurt + Honey + Berries
- Salads
- Salmon + Vinaigrette
- Quinoa + Spinach + Shitake Mushroom
- Kale + Beans + Tofu
- Avocado + Beet + Citrus Fruit
- Brown Rice + Black Beans
- Granola Bars
- Dark Chocolate with Nuts & Raisins
- Chicken Teriyaki with Brown Rice

In different communities and age groups there is a habit of consuming Betel leaves after the meal. On chewing these leaves the soothing aroma generates a feeling of happiness. Betel leaves contain aromatic phenolic compounds. These compounds also stimulate the release of catecholamines which includes dopamine. Dopamine helps to reduce depression.

Beside all these good mood related foods, one should not forget to consume sufficient amount of water throughout the day. Dehydration is one of the most overlooked causes of a foul mood.

While designing the meal, the philosophical approach may also be found to be beneficial. Ancient cultural heritage of both China & India guides almost at every step in this regard. TCM & Yin-Yang concepts are based on beliefs nurtured for centuries but comparatively Indian Ayurvedic system is found to be more scientific.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Food is not about just satiety but a source of achieving a healthy body system. Over the last century, technology advancements and the changing pace of life have led to dramatically changing eating habits. Our menus & meal timings changed and the reliance on packaged, convenience foods increased. Little did we realize that the food we were consuming was definitely filling our stomach on time but was playing havoc with the healthy body systems.

Rather pouncing on food, we need to have a careful handling with our mental health. It is just a pathway to radiant health and vitality along with the proper balance of happiness. It's our body and method of communication, where the fundamental need is not being met.

Employees may be guided for meditation & self-motivation along with gastronomical options for mood

elevation. In the organization workshops may be arranged to guide the employees on Mood Food creations and practical benefits may be explained. While dealing with these one should keep the followings in mind:

1. Inclusion of the Mood-Food in diet
2. Selection of ingredients as per individual employee's need
3. Exclusion of harmful combinations of food
4. Guidance about proper timing of consumption

Offering the mood elevating foods scientifically & traditionally to the employees would result wonders in the organization. Management should understand and consider for a holistic approach which may act on the employees from inside without any negative impact.

Thus, when we realize that food is one of the components of being happy and can combine it with other components, the result would become manifold and we can create an enjoyable environment for others also without much extra effort.

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