



# Intuitive Eating: Explore Your Relationship with Food

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# Poll Question

Have you heard of Intuitive Eating?

Yes

No



# Objectives

- Explore 10 Principles of Intuitive Eating



# What is Intuitive Eating (IE)?

- Cultivating a healthy relationship with food, mind and body
- Anti-diet approach
- Honoring your health
- Evidenced-based



# Poll Question:

## Where have you experienced diet culture?

- Social Media
- TV advertisements
- Gym
- Family and/or friends
- Doctor/health care providers
- News
- Diet Books

# Diet Culture & Weight stigma

- Social media
- Internet
- Advertisements
- Diet books/magazines
- TV, commercials
- Dieting and dissatisfaction with your body



# 10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

- 1- Reject the Diet Mentality
- 2- Honor Your Hunger
- 3- Make Peace with Food
- 4- Challenge the Food Police
- 5- Discover the Satisfaction Factor



# 10 Principles of Intuitive Eating cont.

6- Feel Your Fullness

7- Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness

8- Respect Your Body

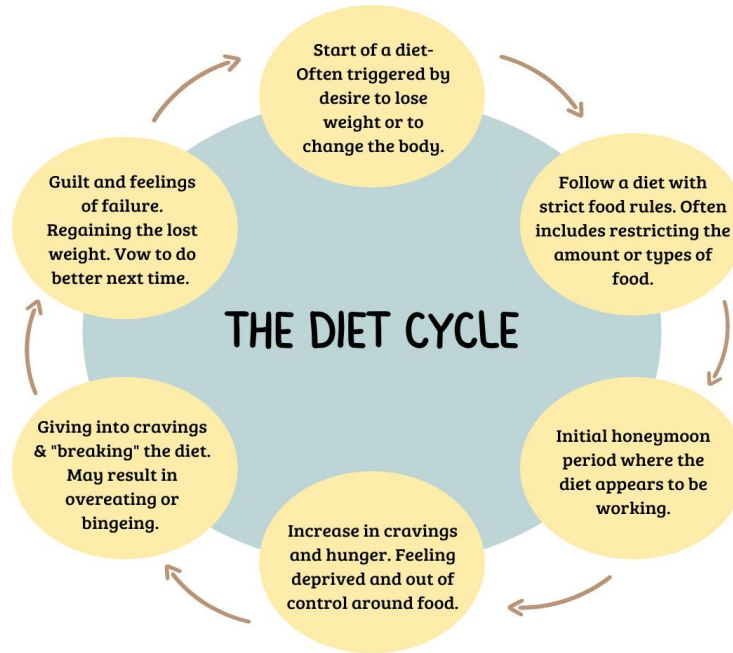
9- Movement- Feel the Difference

10- Honor Your Health with Gentle Nutrition





# The Diet Cycle



# Independent Reflection Question

What diet  
mentality  
thoughts have  
you had?



# Principle 1: Reject the Diet Mentality

The first step of letting go of any form of dieting or diet thinking is vital in your journey to nourishing your body and honoring your health. If you allow even one small hope to linger that a new and better diet might be lurking around the corner, it will prevent you from being free to rediscover Intuitive Eating.

# Diet vs. Non-Diet Mentality

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Diet Mentality</u>	<u>Non Diet Mentality</u>
<u>Eating/Food Choices</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Do I deserve it?</li><li>-If I eat a high calorie food, I have to find a way to make up for it</li><li>-I feel guilty when I eat high-calorie foods or foods high in carbs</li><li>-I view food as my enemy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Am I hungry?</li><li>-Do I want it?</li><li>-Will I feel deprived if I don't eat it</li><li>-Will it be satisfying?</li><li>-Does it taste good?</li></ul>
<u>Movement Benefits</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-I focus primarily on the calories burned</li><li>-I feel guilty if I miss a designated exercise day</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-I focus primarily on how movement makes me feel, especially the energizing and stress relieving factors</li></ul>
<u>Progress is Viewed as</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-How many pounds did I lose?</li><li>-How do I look?</li><li>-What do other people think of how I look?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-My weight is not my goal or an indicator of my progress</li><li>-I have increased trust with myself and food</li><li>-I recognize inner body cues</li></ul>

# Principle 2: Honor Your Hunger

**Biological hunger is your body's signs and signals indicating to you that it needs nourishment.**

## What does biological hunger look/feel like?

- Being hangry/irritable
- Stomach signs
- Feeling faint
- Trouble concentrating
- Thinking about food or eating
- Dizziness/lightheaded
- Headache
- Low energy

\* These are not always hunger but they can be so it's important to understand

# How to Honor Your Biological Hunger

## \*\* Getting to Know Your Hunger

- Check in several times a day
- 0-painfully hungry-----10-painfully full
- No right or wrong answer
- Take care not to get overly hungry

# The Other Faces of Hunger

**Taste Hunger** - Eating because something sounds good or the occasion calls for it.

**Practical Hunger** - This is planning ahead eating.

- No time to eat
- Chronic stress/illness

**Emotional Hunger** - Desiring to eat food to cope with emotional feelings rather than biological need.



# Principle 3: Make Peace with Food

Give yourself unconditional permission to eat. If you tell yourself you can't have a particular food, when you finally give in to the forbidden food it can lead to intense cravings, possibly overeating, and overwhelming guilt.



# Psychological Deprivation

The Honor Your Hunger Principle looked at the effects of biological deprivation. This principle will examine psychological deprivation.

- Long term restriction of items including food, set us up to view them as extra special and initiate euphoria and cravings for these items.
  - Ex: Give a 2 year old a basket of new toys but tell him he can't play with the cardboard box they came in. That is all he will want to play with.

## Deprivation Backlash (Common results of deprivation)

- Last supper eating
- One last shot
- Food Competition

# The Key: Unconditional Permission to Eat

The key to abolishing the pattern of restraint and subsequent overeating is to give yourself unconditional permission to eat.

## This means:

- Throwing out the preconceived notion that certain foods are “good” and others are “bad.”
  - “No one food has the power to make you gain or lose weight”
- Eating what you really want.
  - Yes, what you want!!!
- Eating without obligatory penance.
  - Example: “Okay, I can have the cheesecake now, but tomorrow I diet.”
  - These kinds of personal food deals are *not* unconditional.

# Principle 4: Challenge the Food Police

## What does food policing involve?

Nagging thoughts about food or towards food.

## How do I know when I'm having food police thoughts?

Often show up as a negative thought related to consuming food (can't/won't/don't) but can also affirm superiority "I am being good".

## Why is this important to intuitive eating?

Food policing can detract from your ability to connect with your internal hunger cues.



# Example of Reframing Thoughts

**Unreasonable Thought:** *“It would be okay to eat fruits and vegetables--that’s good. But it’s bad to eat bread or pasta.”*

**Question to Ask:**

*“How do I feel when I only eat fruits and vegetables as my carbs?”*

**Thought reframed, based on past experience**

**Reflection**



# Reframing Diet Mentality

**DIET MENTALITY**  
I don't want other people to think I've let myself go, so I should go on a diet.

**REFRAME**  
When I dieted in the past, it was hard for me to do social things and connect with my friends who care about me no matter my size, so it's not worth the mental energy to change my appearance for those who do.

*THE Joy OF Eating*

**DIET MENTALITY**  
I can't control myself around sweets, so I shouldn't allow myself to eat them.

**REFRAME**  
Of course I feel out of control around sweets! I've always been restricting them. While I might have more experiences with sweets that don't feel so great as I learn to trust that they'll always be available, I know that restriction isn't the answer.

*THE Joy OF Eating*

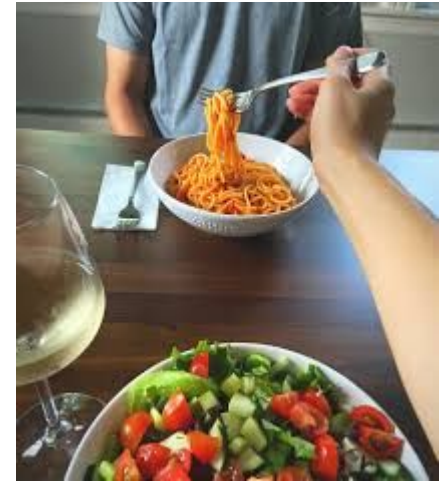
**DIET MENTALITY**  
That pizza I want to eat is unhealthy.

**REFRAME**  
Actually, obsessing about that pizza I want to eat is unhealthy.

*THE Joy OF Eating*

# Principle 5: Discover the Satisfaction Factor

Eating what is truly satisfying without judgment can contribute to better mental and physical health. When you create an inviting, pleasurable eating environment, while eating what you truly want, you will feel more satisfied and content.

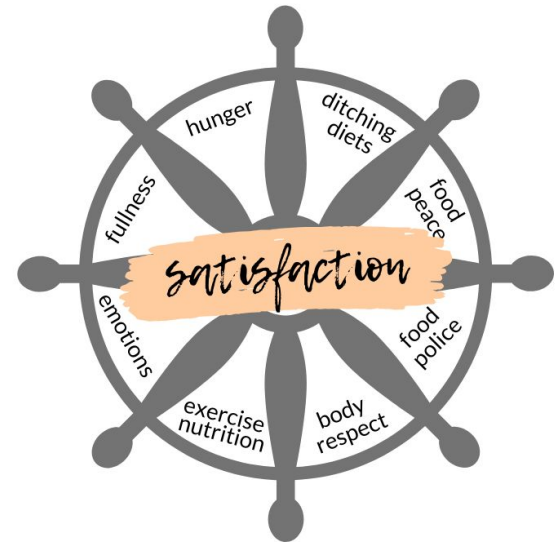


# Finding Satisfaction

Finding satisfaction in eating is the driving force of intuitive eating which unites all 10 principles.

Food must be both nourishing and appealing to taste to be satisfying.

the satisfaction factor



# How to Increase Satisfaction

- Ask yourself what you really want to eat
- Discover the pleasure of the palate
- Make your eating experience more enjoyable
- Check in- Does it still taste good?  
Am I still hungry?





# Principle 6: Feel Your Fullness

Can you imagine what it feels like to be *comfortably full*?

Common descriptions:

- A subtle feeling of stomach fullness
- Feeling satisfied and content
- Pleasant completeness
- Nothingness-- neither hunger nor full (neutral)

**Note:** Sensation is highly individual and it will take time for you to develop your internal wisdom regarding your body's comfortable fullness.



# Recognizing Comfortable Satiety

**Fullness Factors** - Every meal is a little different and what it takes to experience fullness varies.

## **Some factors that affect fullness:**

- The amount of time that has passed since you last ate
- The kind of food you eat
- The amount of food still remaining in the stomach at the time of eating
- Initial hunger level
- Social influence



# How to Respect Your Fullness

**Conscious awareness eating** → Conscious awareness is important to stepping away from blind autopilot eating (some individuals have described this experience as mindless eating)

- Pause in the middle of a meal or snack (a time to check in with yourself)
  - This does not mean you are done eating or have to stop eating. It is simply an opportunity to check in.
- During your pause, conduct a:
  - Taste check
  - Satiety check



# Principle 7: Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness

Becoming an intuitive eater means learning to be gentle and compassionate with yourself about how you use food to cope.

## Discover what you truly need:

- What am I feeling?
- What do I need?
- *If applicable, ask for help*



# Emotional Hunger

Let go of the guilt associated with emotional eating!

- Emotional eating can be healthy and helpful!
- Eating can be an emotional experience and those emotions can contribute to satisfaction!
- Diet culture has instilled a fear of emotional eating
- It is not something to be ashamed of or feel guilty for engaging in.

Emotional eating can range from pleasurable to numbing to punishing.



# Meeting Your Needs with Kindness

## Ways to meet your needs with kindness

- Getting rest
- Expressing feelings
- Being heard, understood and accepted
- Being intellectually and creatively stimulated
- Receiving comfort and warmth
- Seek nurturance



## Ways to connect with your feelings:

- Write your feelings in a journal
- Call a friend
- Record your feelings in your phone
- Confront the person who is triggering your feelings
- Let yourself cry
- Sit with your feelings (discover how the intensity will diminish with time)
- If you have trouble identifying your feelings or coping with them, it may be helpful to talk with a therapist, especially if it is a persistent issue.

# Principle 8: Respect Your Body

As long as you continue to criticize your body's size, shape or characteristics, it will be difficult to reject the diet mentality and connect with your body's innate needs. Learning to respect your body is a crucial part of being at peace with your body and food.



# Developing Body Respect

**Instead of body bashing, focus on things you like about your body, consider focusing on ways your body serves you**  
**Practice the basic principles of body respect:**

- My body deserves to be fed
- My body deserves to be treated with dignity
- My body deserves to be touched affectionately, with my consent and with respect
- My body deserves to move comfortably within the extent it is possible



# Poll Question

**What are some positive effects of moving you have experienced?**

- 1- More energy
- 2- Decreased stress
- 3- Improved mood
- 4- Increased Concentration
- 5- Better sleep



# Principle 9: Movement- Feel the Difference

- Focus on how it feels
- Decouple movement from weight loss
- Movement as self care



# Developing a Lifelong Relationship With Movement

- Get active in your daily living
- Fit movement where it fits
- Make movement fun
- Be comfortable with
  - What you wear
  - Who you're with
  - Where you are
  - Type of movement
- Remember to rest



# Principle 10: Honor Your Health with Gentle Nutrition

- Focuses on your individual needs
- Does not obsess over every meal or snack
- Looks at the big picture of eating over time
- Gets rid of guilt over eating choices
- Considers nutrition as one influence on health

# What Is Healthy Eating?

Having a healthy balance of foods

AND

Having a healthy relationship with food!!



# Play Food vs Nutrient Dense Food

- We all need play time in our lives, including in our eating!
- Play food vs nutrient dense food
  - Replace “junk” food with “play” food → positive and encouraging language
  - What comes to mind when you think of “play”? How does it make you feel?
- Rigid healthy eating patterns can lead to disordered eating
- When you have made peace with food, play food is not all that you desire



# Intuitive Eating Summary

Remember that the concept “for the most part” is central.

For the most part, strive for variety, moderation, and balance in your eating.

For the most part, enjoy both nutritious foods and some play foods.

For the most part, eat satisfying meals.



# Resources

- [10 Principles of Intuitive Eating](#)
- [Intuitive Eating Books](#)
  - By Evelyn Tribole, MS, RDN & Elyse Resch, MS, RDN
- [MHealthy's Nourish Your Whole Self program](#)
  - Registration is open until October 11
- [MHealthy Website](#)

