

10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

Reject the diet mentality



In a society ridden with diet shakes and weight loss ads, it's easy to get caught up in food rules and restrictions. Weight loss attempts very seldom lead to permanent body changes. Work on letting go of the goal to change your body and focus on well being instead.

Honour your hunger



Most of us are born with a natural ability to determine when we are hungry. Experiment reconnecting with these hunger cues.

Hunger can manifest itself in many ways: stomach rumbling, irritability, low mood, shaking, weakness, headache, etc.

Make peace with food



Give yourself unconditional permission to eat all foods. When you label foods as "good/healthy" or "bad/unhealthy", it often leads to an increase desire and awareness of foods deemed off limits. This can lead to uncontrollable cravings, overeating and bingeing. Work on embracing all foods!

Challenge the food police



The Food Police lives in your mind and imposes food rules and regulations, it judges every choice and it inflicts feelings of guilt and shame.

When confronted with thoughts from the Food Police, ask yourself if they are kind, helpful and true.

Respect your fullness



Stop during meals to ask yourself how full you feel. Have you passed the point of comfortable fullness? Could you eat more?

Pay attention to cues that you are no longer hungry.

Discover Satisfaction



It can certainly be helpful to eat nutritious foods. However, when we only focus on choosing foods based on nutrition, we often forget about pleasure.

When making food choices, remember to select foods you really want to eat. This will maximize satisfaction!

Honour your feelings without using food



It's okay to eat emotionally at times. In fact, the eating experience is an emotional experience! However, when turning to food is our only way to cope in difficult times, this can be problematic. Look at ways to take care of yourself without using food. When you do turn to food, remember self-compassion.

Respect your body



Body positivity or body love may seem unrealistic for you. Why not start with body respect? Learn to honour all of the things your body does for you.

You are more than a body. Your size, race, gender, level of disability, health, or age does not define your worth!

Joyful Movement



Do you exercise out of punishment, to change your body, or out of obligation? Often, these are not great motivators.

Focus on forms of movement that make you feel good. Exercise does not need to be intense and sweat-inducing to provide positive benefits.

Gentle Nutrition



There is no such thing as a perfect diet. Make food choices that honour your physical and mental health, your taste buds and your lifestyle.

Eat with curiosity and self-compassion.

Josée Sovinsky, Registered Dietitian

Based on the intuitive eating principles developed by Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch:

<http://www.intuitiveeating.org/10-principles-of-intuitive-eating/>