

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO FOOD FREEDOM



Learn how to nourish your body,
tune into your hunger cues, and
love food again.

A Letter To You

Hello, and thank you for downloading this guide!

I'm Allison, a registered dietitian with a passion for helping people find peace with food and their bodies without dieting, restriction, or judgement. If you're here, chances are you're tired of struggling with your relationship to food, have been jumping from diet to diet, or are unhappy with how your body looks and feels.

My goal with this guide is to give you the tools you need to start removing yourself from diet culture, trust your internal cues for hunger and fullness, and to reframe your thoughts around food and nutrition so you are no longer constantly consumed with negative food and body image talk.

In this guide you will find an introductory walk through to the 10 principles of intuitive eating coined by Elyse Resch and Evelyn Tribole, a hunger and fullness scale, and some journal prompts to help you reframe your thoughts about food and dieting.

I hope you find these tools helpful as a starting point into living your life without it being consumed by food and body thoughts and how to navigate those days where these thoughts pop up.

-Allison

Intuitive eating is...

- Eating guided by your internal hunger cues and personal preferences
- Not feeling guilty for your food choices
- Having variety, balance, flexibility, and adequacy in your food choices (and life!)
- Recognizing fear foods or food rules and challenging them

Intuitive eating is NOT...

- Eating guided by external cues and the desire to maintain a certain weight or size
- Feeling guilty for eating certain foods
- Ignoring your internal cues and food preferences
- Comparing your food choices and body with others
- Calorie counting, dieting, or creating food rules

It can be difficult to remove that external noise and guilt, but the 10 principles of intuitive eating were created to help you work toward that food freedom.

Intuitive eating is a long-term process - not a quick fix and not something to get 'right' or 'wrong'. Implementing these principles may take a while to feel natural and won't come overnight, but they will help you view food and nutrition through a new lens.

10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

1. Reject the Diet Mentality - dieting is a short-term fix and 95% of people who diet to lose weight will gain the weight back once they stop the diet. While it may lead to the results you want short term, it's likely that this diet is not sustainable, may lead to binge eating or other eating disorders, and lower your self-esteem and body image.

2. Honor Your Hunger - eat when you are hungry! If you don't have hunger cues right now, begin with creating a semi-structured eating pattern and modify it to your daily life. Ignoring your hunger leads to the brain not trusting the body and you might feel dizzy, irritable, or fatigued.

3. Make Peace with Food - food is not the enemy and no foods are off limits. In fact, our bodies tend to crave what we tell ourselves we can't have. Allowing yourself to eat the sweets or pizza will keep you satisfied and you are less likely to enter back into the binge and restrict cycle.



10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

4. Challenge the Food Police - The food police is the voice that tells us if we should or shouldn't eat a food based on all the external noise we hear from diet culture. Instead of framing foods as 'good' or 'bad' you can challenge this voice by considering all foods as morally neutral.

5. Discover the Satisfaction Factor - eat foods you ENJOY! Not every eating experience will be a 10/10, but the more often you eat foods you like to eat, you are less likely to over or under eat or have intense food cravings. Eating foods because the food police tells you they're good is not likely to lead to a positive eating experience.

6. Feel Your Fullness - it is ok to be full. Sometimes we eat until we are comfortably full and sometimes we eat past comfortable fullness because we want to order dessert, want to celebrate something exciting, or want to deal with a bad day. Sometimes we need to have a snack before we are truly hungry because we won't have time to eat again soon. These scenarios are examples of practical hunger and fullness. While we don't always want to be uncomfortably full - as humans we eat food for a variety of reasons that aren't always related to our physical feelings.



10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

7. Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness - food can provide comfort and be a source of enjoyment, but it isn't a long-term solution to dealing with emotions. Like I said in principle 6, humans eat food for so many reasons other than hunger and fullness. This is a normal part of being alive! However, constantly eating to get rid of bad emotions or out of boredom can have negative effects on your mental health and subdue our internal cues. Finding other ways to deal with negative emotions, such as therapy, meditation, or talking to a friend are important in finding true peace with food and your body.

8. Respect Your Body - our bodies are meant to change and do so much for us, yet we live in a society molded to make us feel bad about ourselves. While we may not like our bodies every day, we can work toward feeling neutral about ourselves. What is one compliment you can give yourself today?



10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

9. Gentle Movement - gentle movement or physical activity can be anything you enjoy doing that gets you moving. Movement is a great stress relief and mood booster. You don't have to workout for hours a day to benefit from some type of movement. And don't forget, rest is still as important as physical activity!



10. Gentle Nutrition - once you are eating enough and eating regularly, you can start to focus more on nutritional value of food without dieting or being restrictive. This is another place to remind you that every eating experience is not going to be perfect and having complete balance isn't something you have to strive for. Your body knows how to thrive on the nutrients you give it.

Pairing carbohydrate foods with protein and/or fatty foods is a good place to start. For example, eating a banana will keep you full for a little while, which may be appropriate for a snack if you're eating again soon. If you know you won't eat again for a while, try eating this banana with some nuts, yogurt, or cheese to keep you full for a longer period of time.

Food for Thought

While in the midst of diet culture it can be easy to forget to check in with ourselves because we are so focused on the external noise. Every day we are bombarded with negative messages surrounding food and bodies that can influence what we eat and how we view ourselves. While this isn't an all inclusive list - the next few pages include questions and journal prompts for you to get curious about your relationship to food and help support your journey to food freedom.



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

Make a list of some of your food or exercise rules, then ask yourself: Are these rules helpful or harmful? Challenge these food rules by writing statements that are positive or neutral.

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Negative self-talk happens to us all. Write down some positive affirmations you can tell yourself daily - especially when a negative thought comes up. If you're struggling to think of any - I'll start it off for you below.

I am strong. I am worthy. I am beautiful. I deserve to be nourished.

I deserve to be happy.

Hunger and Fullness Scale

Use this chart, adapted from the intuitive eating workbook, to see where you are at through the day. If you are a pen and paper person, use the tracker template on the next page for a few days to see if you notice any trends you can adapt to. The "ideal" range is from 3 to 7, but remember, it isn't about being perfect - it is about recognizing and being comfortable with your own body.

- 1** Painfully hungry, starving, irritable
- 2** Very Hungry, distracted
- 3** Hungry and ready to eat
- 4** Starting to be hungry, stomach growling
- 5** Neutral – not hungry or full
- 6** Not hungry – slightly full
- 7** Satisfied and comfortable
- 8** Slightly uncomfortable – full
- 9** Uncomfortably full
- 10** Feeling sick, stuffed, painfully full

Tracker

[illegible]

Ready for more?

Learning to listen to your internal cues and accepting yourself how are you right NOW can be challenging. Sometimes we need some extra support to truly start healing from years of dieting and negative body image talk.

To book a discovery call with me, head to the link below or send me an e-mail and I would be happy to chat!

Book a Discovery Call



@nutrition.with.allison



Nutrition With Allison



allison@nutritionwithallison.com

With love,

Allison