

# Applying the Principles of Intuitive Eating



CINA HOEY, LCSW

# never diet again...

MAKING PEACE WITH FOOD FOR GOOD



## What is Intuitive Eating?

Intuitive Eating is a style of eating that is based on your body's unique needs. You accomplish this by partnering with your body, becoming more attuned to your internal signals in order to determine what, when, and how much to eat. Ultimately, you become the authority on what to eat, rather than listening to a diet or program. This is a long-term, sustainable approach to a healthy, easy, balanced relationship with food.

## Is this new?

This is not new! This program was created in the 90's by two amazing women - Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch. The book Intuitive Eating was first published in 1995 and continues to be one of the most valuable resources for anyone looking to find peace and balance with eating.

## Is this just another diet?

This is not a diet at all. No rigid rules, starving yourself, counting calories, eating foods you don't like, or avoiding the foods that you do. Intuitive Eating aims to teach you to trust yourself and your body, unlike a diet, which teaches you that you can't.





# The 10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

The 10 principles of Intuitive Eating are a set of guidelines that are intended to gently guide you back to yourself.

Additionally, they are to help you unlearn some of the patterns that have been learned through years of restrictive dieting, not trusting your body, and looking for the next weight loss strategy.

Welcome to your new approach to eating. Be open-minded while learning something new, patient with yourself as you make changes, and compassionate when you mess up.

Let's go!

“

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# #1

## reject the diet mentality

I'm sure you've been on several diets at this point - most people have. And I know you're one of them because those of us that diet are the ones that become the most confused, frustrated, and lost when it comes to food. Although it's glorified by our culture, normalized by everyone you know, and generally regarded as the thing to do when you're unhappy with your weight, dieting is actually the biggest problem of all.

Diets are not designed to work long term. They mimic starvation, send the mind and body into a protective survival response, lead to overeating and binge eating, slow your metabolism, and ultimately damage your relationship with food.

To improve your relationship with food, the first thing to do is ditch the diet!





# #2

## honor your hunger

This principle is all about getting back in touch with the wisdom of your own body rather the rules of a diet, your calorie counter app, or that fit girl you follow on Instagram.

Our bodies have been designed to alert us when we are hungry. Ghrelin is the hormone that sends signals to your brain to let you know that your body needs food. That's right, there's a built-in system that we all seem to have forgotten about. Many diets will structure themselves around a certain amount of calories/points/macronutrients, or timing your meals, or only eating within a certain window. None of this honors the fact that your body can already do this for you.

Do not panic when you feel you've eaten too much. Do not panic when you feel you've went "over" your caloric intake for the day. Do not try attempt to un-do this by becoming restrictive and skipping a meal, just wait until your body lets you know it is time to eat again.

The more you try to push away your hunger (drinking iced coffee, tea, sparkling water, and energy drinks) the louder this signal eventually becomes. You cannot out-smart your body. It's way more intelligent and efficient than you know.

You know you're hungry when your stomach feels empty, is growling, you're feeling lightheaded or shaky, or HANGRY! Honor your hunger and eat.



# #3

## make peace with food

Giving yourself unconditional permission to eat means you relax your rigid rules about what you're "allowed" to eat. Once you've labeled a food as "off limits," it creates a scarcity mindset, scarcity leads to anxiety, and in order to soothe this anxiety, we must eat the food to know that we can have it.

Constantly feeling restricted is the main driver of binge, emotional, and overeating. It is impossible to eat mindfully when we have cut out a certain food for a while. We lose trust in ourselves around food this way. Something is off-limits to us, then we go overboard the next time we allow ourselves to have it. In the case of binge eating, this can feel completely out of control, not as if you're allowing yourself to have it, but as if you can't stop yourself even if you wanted to.

So far we've learned that in order to make peace with food we must let go of dieting, honor our hunger when our body sends us the signal, and now we'll learn how we decide what foods to eat.





# #4

## challenge the food police

The "food police" is that voice in your head that is constantly assessing whether or not it believes you are doing a good enough job with your weight management efforts. It is the voice that has some judgment to make about every food and whether or not it is good or bad.

It's the voice that tells you you're not allowed to eat past a certain time, or before a certain time.

It has strict rules, ideas, and beliefs about everything concerning eating that has been accumulated from the many "tips" you've picked up over time from various diets, magazines, and Dr. Oz episodes. They must be let go of now in order to restore your balance with food.

This includes categorizing foods as "good" or "bad," only allowing yourself to eat within a certain caloric range and shame spiraling when you go over, eliminating entire types of foods or food groups.

This also includes judging whether or not you had a "good" week or a "bad" day with food based on the foods you ate or the calories you consumed. This mentality is similar to the "on the wagon/off the wagon" mindset and tends to also lead to overeating, shame, and a lack of attunement to your body.



# discover the satisfaction factor

Strict dieting takes all the fun out of eating. The satisfaction factor is about truly enjoying the foods that you're choosing. One of the main reasons a diet is unsustainable is that it is unenjoyable. Eating foods that we do not actually like, or not having enough variety and pleasure, is simply non sustainable. Does this mean you can and should eat cupcakes for every meal because they are satisfying? Not exactly.

The good news is that your body will ask you for a variety of foods at different times. Sometimes that's a kale salad, sometimes it's a bowl of cereal. As best you can, check in with yourself about what type of food you're in the mood for, rather than just sticking to what's low calorie, low fat, diet-approved, fits your calories, etc.

The key point here is that if we are not satisfied with our food we will usually reach for more food when we are done eating and it will most likely be the food we wanted in the first place! Forcing yourself to only eat "approved" foods is a thing of the past.





# #6 feel your fullness

Just as there is a hormone released in your body to tell you to start eating, there is also a hormone released to tell you when to stop because your body is a brilliant system trying to keep you alive 100% of the time.

Slow down, pay attention, check in with your belly, and do your best to respect the signal to stop when your body has had enough. Many clients will tell me that they simply do not have this signal, but I promise you, even if you have not heard in in a very long time, it is there!

A few tips to be able to reconnect with this cue is to eat without distractions, slow down as you eat, put your utensils down in between bites, and take pauses to see if you are really still hungry. This simply takes practice and becomes easier as you go.



# #7

## cope with your emotions



We are conditioned to eat whether we are happy or sad, celebrating or grieving, and everything in between. When we eat to cope with our feelings, it does not solve the original problem that made us emotional to begin with, it only adds new problems - now we're overeating, don't feel well, our clothes don't fit, and we feel uncomfortable, which of course just brings up more difficult feelings like shame and guilt that start the cycle all over again.

At some point, we must learn how to cope with difficult feelings without food or we will continue to find ourselves in a vicious cycle. Utilizing emotion regulation techniques teach us how to ride through discomfort without food, which creates a healthier balance with ourselves, develop resilience, strengthen our trust and belief in ourselves, and supports our efforts in understanding true hunger versus an urge to eat.

Regulating your emotions is simply a set of skills that anyone can learn. Some ideas on how to better regulate your emotions include journaling, meditating and practicing mindfulness, meeting with a therapist, self-help books, and finding other creative outlets for overwhelming feelings. Take some time to brainstorm what you can do in difficult moments and find what works best for you!





## #8 respect your body

There is a force beyond your control that impacts your size even more than the foods you eat - your genetics, which means that even if you follow the same exact diet as someone else, you both will have different results due to your DNA.

Your "weight set point" is the range that your body feels most comfortable in without dieting or manipulating your food intake, eating intuitively, and moving your body somewhat regularly. Constantly wishing your body was fundamentally different will leave you unhappy, reaching for diets and other unhealthy measures, and keep you from the peace you deserve.

Stop comparing yourself to other women that have completely different genetics than you. Self-acceptance is key! If you feel that is a challenge, consider for a moment the billions of functions your body is performing right this very moment. Your body is absolutely exquisite, keeping you alive from moment to moment, breathing, digesting, filtering, growing, and keeping you alive moment to moment.

This is your body. Own it.

#9

# move your body



One of the most unfortunate side effects of a toxic relationship with food is that our thoughts and feelings about exercise become distorted as well. "Diet and exercise" has always been the prescription for weight loss, linking the two and placing expectations on you to exercise in the same way you were supposed to restrict food or count calories. We seem to have forgotten that moving our body is a privilege.

Your health, strength, energy, and ability to move are gifts that you have been given. Do not force yourself into "calorie-torching" exercise that you do not enjoy. Instead, find movement that feels good to you and make it a regular part of your life.

Those of us that have struggled in our relationship with our bodies have also become masters at dissociating from it - how else would we be able to completely ignore hunger cues by skipping meals or fullness cues when we're bingeing? Exercise is one of the ways we can reconnect with our body and attune more to its cues, wisdom, and magic.



# #10 honor your health



The absence of strict dieting does not equal a food free-for-all. If you are truly attuned to your body, you will see that it will ask for a variety of foods, wants to feel good, and will communicate to you about which foods it appreciates and which foods it doesn't.

A question I encourage my clients to ask themselves before eating is “How do I want to feel after eating this meal?”

The practice of mindful eating will support you in these efforts.

# Thank! You!

If I could add an 11th principle it would be to be so patient and gentle with yourself throughout this process. If you've been dieting, your relationship with food has taken some really damaging hits and this approach is likely bringing up a ton of fear and resistance in you. Be gentle and easy with yourself as you try something new .

You might find yourself doing well with certain aspects of this and totally tanking in other areas. That's okay. This may be a great time to work with a skilled therapist or mental health professional to support you as you work through these changes.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this book. If you found the information helpful but are still struggling to implement everything, please reach out to inquire about individual or group sessions. Additionally, you can find more information and free resources on my website at [www.cinahoeey.com](http://www.cinahoeey.com).

I am here to support you in any way that I can and I wish you the absolute best of luck on your journey. You can do this.

All my love,  
Cina

