



Intuitive Eating 101

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Notice: This presentation is to bring awareness of the topic but is not a substitute for any treatment that may be prescribed by your doctor. If you suspect you have a medical problem, please seek competent help.

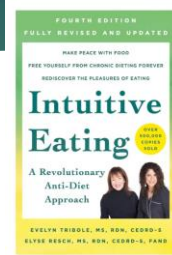


Objectives

1. Identify key differences between mindful eating and intuitive eating.
2. Discuss the tool of the hunger scale and how it can be used for yourself or your patients to better recognize hunger and fullness to achieve overall wellness.
3. Describe the 10 principles of intuitive eating and how this relates to building a healthy lifestyle and relationship with food.

Background

- ▶ In 1995, two registered dietitians unveiled a radical approach to food and health called Intuitive Eating
 - ▶ Evelyn Tribole, MS, RDN, CEDRD-S
 - ▶ Elyse Resch, MS, RDN, CEDS-S, FAND
- ▶ Intuitive Eating book is in its 4th edition (most recent published in 2020)
- ▶ Intuitive eating is based on 10 Principles
- ▶ Given rise to nearly 125 studies to date showing benefit



What is Intuitive Eating?

- ▶ Intuitive eating is a non-diet approach to eating that emphasizes internal cues over external diet rules.
- ▶ Process of honoring health by listening and responding to direct messages of the body in order to meet your physical and psychological needs

What it is not: A diet or food plan. No pass or fail. No "blowing it".

Benefits of Intuitive Eating

- ▶ Higher HDL ("good") cholesterol
- ▶ Lower triglycerides
- ▶ Lower rates of emotional eating
- ▶ Lower rates of disordered eating and eating disorders
- ▶ Higher self-esteem
- ▶ Better body image
- ▶ More satisfaction with life
- ▶ Optimism and well-being
- ▶ Proactive coping skills

"Based on the research to date, it can be argued that Intuitive Eating is a measurable eating style that may be beneficially associated with health indicators..."
- Steven Hawks

Benefits of Intuitive Eating (cont.)

Negates the negative health effects associated with dieting:

- ▶ Food and body preoccupation
- ▶ Weight cycling (i.e. yo-yo'ing)
- ▶ Lower self-esteem
- ▶ Eating disorders
- ▶ Weight stigma/discrimination
- ▶ Focus on weight vs. sustainable health promoting behaviors



Mindful Eating v.s Intuitive Eating

Mindful Eating

- ▶ Practice awareness and intention while eating without judgement
- ▶ Slow down and be fully in tune with all the tastes, smells, and textures of the food in front of you

Intuitive Eating

- ▶ Broader philosophy
- ▶ Self-care, focused eating framework that includes tenets of mindful eating but also includes principles about exercise and body respect

Mindful Eating v.s Intuitive Eating (cont.)

- ▶ It is possible to practice mindful eating without practicing intuitive eating, but it is not possible to practice intuitive eating without incorporating mindfulness

For those who struggle with eating issues, both mindful eating and intuitive eating can help normalize the relationship with food

Hunger Scale

Diabetes Success Center Inc.
Hunger & Fullness Scale

Use this chart to rate your hunger (before meals) and fullness (after meals).

OVERLY HUNGRY	1	PAINFULLY HUNGRY; "STARVING"; SHAKY; IRRITABLE; FAINT
	2	VERY HUNGRY; DISTRACTED; HEADACHE
	3	HUNGRY AND READY TO EAT
HUNGER & FULLNESS SWEET SPOT	4	STARTING TO FEEL HUNGRY; STOMACH IS GROWLING
	5	NEUTRAL; NOT HUNGRY OR FULL
	6	NOT HUNGRY ANYMORE; SLIGHTLY FULL
	7	SATIATED AND COMFORTABLE
OVERLY FULL	8	SLIGHTLY UNCOMFORTABLE; FULL
	9	UNCOMFORTABLY FULL
	10	FEEL SICK; "STUFFED"; PAINFULLY FULL

10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

**#1
Reject the Diet Mentality**

- ▶ A diet implies something short-term/limited
- ▶ Research repeatedly demonstrates that individuals on any extreme weight loss program do not maintain the weight loss
- ▶ By rejecting diet mentality, you begin to view diet changes as new lifestyle habits that you can sustain long term

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Reflect on your experience with dieting. Here are some questions to help you get started:
 - ▶ What diets, meal plans, or "wellness programs" have you tried? Did you lose weight? Did you gain the weight back? How long did it take? Why wasn't the plan sustainable? Do you want to be on a diet for the rest of your life?
 - ▶ In what ways has dieting and obsessing over food and weight loss impacted your life?
 - ▶ How much time, energy, and mental space has dieting taken up? Is that how you want to spend your time and energy?
 - ▶ In what ways does diet culture or the diet mentality show up in your life? Can you reduce it?

#2 Honor Your Hunger

- ▶ Learning true hunger cues and eating when the body needs energy is key
- ▶ Keep your body biologically fed with adequate energy and nutrition, otherwise you can trigger a primal drive to overeat

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ If you don't seem to experience hunger signals over long periods of time, it is possible to try and get them back.
 1. Set a flexible routine of adequately nourishing the body every 3-5 hours
 2. Check in with your body before you begin eating. Take note of how you're feeling.
 3. Do you notice any signs of hunger? Such as:
 - Lower energy
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Mouthwatering
 - Thinking about food
 - Growling stomach
 - Fidgeting
 - Cravings
 - Mood changes

#3 Make Peace with Food

- ▶ Remove all "bad" labels surrounding food
- ▶ If you tell yourself that you "can't" or "shouldn't" have a particular food, it can lead to intense feelings of deprivation that build into uncontrollable cravings and, often, bingeing
- ▶ If you want to consume a particular food, do it.

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ This is not usually the principle to start with
- ▶ If you're ready and in a good place to make peace with food, start by making a list of all your forbidden foods
- ▶ Choose just one food on the list to start incorporating into your diet
- ▶ Choose a time and place when you are going to eat that food. Make sure to choose a lowstress day and make sure emotions aren't strong that day
- ▶ Continue to incorporate this food into your diet on a regular basis

#4 Challenge the Food Police

- ▶ The voice in your head that criticizes and judges you for what you eat
- ▶ Ex: having a slice of cake at a birthday and thinking how "bad" you were or eating a salad at lunch and praising yourself for being "good"
- ▶ The food police monitor the unreasonable rules that diet culture has created

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Identify a negative thought you have around food or body image and write it down.
- ▶ Ask yourself:
 - ▶ Is this thought true?
 - ▶ Is it helpful?
 - ▶ Is it unhelpful or harmful?
- ▶ Then write down three alternatives that are realistic, positive, and more helpful.

#5 Discover the Satisfaction Factor

- ▶ All about being in the moment and creating an inviting, enjoyable environment when eating
- ▶ By increasing mindfulness, it can help increase satisfaction and satiation



How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Make your next meal more satisfying. Ask yourself what you truly want to eat. Sensory qualities to consider include:
 - ▶ Taste
 - ▶ Texture
 - ▶ Temperature
 - ▶ Aroma
 - ▶ Appearance
 - ▶ Volume

#6
Feel Your
Fullness

- ▶ If principle five is all about mental satisfaction, then principle six is about physical satisfaction.
- ▶ Listen for the body signals that tell you that you are no longer hungry
- ▶ Pause in the middle of eating and ask yourself what your current hunger level is

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Different portions and combinations of food will vary in how long they keep you full
- ▶ Keep a food journal and write down what you ate, your level of fullness at the end of the meal, and how long it kept you full and satisfied.
- ▶ Remember, this isn't about judging your eating habits. It's simply a way to explore and discover what works best for you.

#7
Cope with Your
Emotions with
Kindness

- ▶ Food doesn't fix feelings. But often, we eat because we are bored, stressed, anxious or sad -- in other words, emotional reasons.
- ▶ This principle is about finding kind ways to nurture, distract, comfort and cope with your feelings with activities that help you to reduce your stress rather than with food

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Next time you notice yourself reaching for a snack when you are not truly stomach hungry, take a moment to pause and check in with yourself
- ▶ Ask yourself: "What am I feeling?" and "What do I need?"
- ▶ Make a list of other ways to respond to your emotions that works for you: taking a walk, talking to a friend, yoga, meditation, journaling, music, watching funny videos, etc.

#8 Respect Your Body

- ▶ Accept your genetic blueprint
- ▶ Learn to appreciate your features and size without coming up with unrealistic goals
- ▶ Intuitive eating recognizes and respects size diversity and the idea that all bodies are worthy of celebration

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Start to shift your focus to all the things your body can do rather than just focusing on appearance
- ▶ Reflect on the following functions your body performs and what you appreciate about them:
 - ▶ Senses (hearing, sight, touch, taste, smell)
 - ▶ Physical activity (walking, playing sports, lifting weights)
 - ▶ Self-care (sleeping, eating, hygiene)
 - ▶ Health (regulating body temperature, healing from injuries, breathing)

#9
Movement—
Feel the
Difference

- ▶ Shift your focus on how it feels to move your body, rather than the calorie-burning effect of exercise
- ▶ Intuitive eating encourages you to do movements and find activities that bring you joy

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Make a list of all the reasons you exercise or move your body that have nothing to do with weight loss. What's important to you?
- ▶ Examples:
 - ▶ Cardiovascular exercise -> energy to keep up with your kids
 - ▶ Lifting weights -> carry all the groceries inside more tip
 - ▶ Yoga -> relaxes your mind and helps you to sleep better

#10
Honor Your
Health—Gentle
Nutrition

- ▶ This last principle is about providing your body with the nutrients it needs
- ▶ It is importance to feed your body with a variety of fruits, vegetables, proteins, fats and whole grains
- ▶ Nutrition is important. Eating nutrient-dense foods is an act of self-care. It's a way to energize, nourish, and respect your body.

How to Incorporate It

- ▶ Remember, you don't have to eat perfectly to be healthy
- ▶ It's what you eat consistently over time that matters
- ▶ Progress, not perfection, is what counts!

Conclusion

- ▶ Intuitive eating is a journey
- ▶ Empowering process that not only promotes health, but is also a gateway to freedom
- ▶ Trust your gut – use your intuitive talents to feel comfortable with eating and to release yourself from the pursuit of dieting



Intuitive eating doesn't make promises like diets do. But what it does promise is a better relationship with your body and with food – which actually sounds a lot healthier, happier and more sustainable.

Resources

Books

- ▶ Intuitive Eating: A Revolutionary Anti-Diet Approach, 4th Edition
- ▶ [Intuitive Eating, 4th Edition: Evelyn Tribole, MS, RD; Elyse Resch, MS, RD; ISBN-9781570661034 Amazon.com Books](#)

Official Website

- ▶ <http://www.intuitiveeating.org/>

Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor Directory

- ▶ A listing of local allied health professionals who are trained and certified in the Intuitive Eating process
- ▶ <https://www.intuitiveeating.org/certified-counselors/>

Intuitive Eating Online Community

- ▶ Get inspired, hear and share stories. Free but does require signing up.
- ▶ <http://www.intuitiveeatingcommunity.org>

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Questions?

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