Intuitive Eating

Over the years, dieting has become extremely popular and is typically seen as a quick fix to lose weight. Popular culture has made it seem like dieting is the only way to take care of your body, but that is not true. Dieting deprives your body of energy and can lead to binge eating if you restrict what you eat too much. A healthy approach to eating is Intuitive Eating.

Intuitive Eating is a way to honor your body, its natural hunger cues, and to respect your body for what it does for you.[1] It is a lifestyle approach to stop dieting and live your life at peace with food and with your body.[1] You can make peace with food and your body by following the principles below.

10 basic principles of Intuitive Eating[2]:

1. **Reject the Diet Mentality**
    - Stop dieting and reject the idea that you need to diet to be happy.
2. **Honor Your Hunger**
    - Eat when you are hungry and pay attention to what your body is telling you.
3. **Make Peace with Food**
    - Don't restrict any foods. All foods can be part of a balanced diet, and restricting food leads to binging and guilt.
4. **Challenge the Food Police**
    - Don't listen to any thoughts of guilt for foods you previously have restricted or have categorized as "bad". Allow all foods with peace.
5. **Discover the Satisfaction Factor**
    - Find satisfaction in the foods that you eat.
6. **Feel Your Fullness**
    - Listen to your body's natural signals to tell you when you are full.
7. **Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness**
    - Identify what emotions you are feeling and properly address them instead of engaging in emotional eating.
8. **Respect Your Body**
    - Love your body for the way it is and treat it right because of all it does for you.
9. **Movement – Feel the Difference**
    - Find exercise that works for you and helps you to feel healthy.
10. **Honor Your Health – Gentle Nutrition**
    - Incorporate balanced meals into your diet while honoring the foods that you crave and love.

By following these principles, you can live a happier and healthier life in sync with your body and its needs. Don't pressure yourself to follow all these principles at once. Start at principle one and work your way down the list. These principles are here so we can fuel our bodies properly, find satisfaction in our lives, and take care of our bodies.

Here are a few of the benefits of Intuitive Eating:

- Healthier relationship with food.
- Healthier weight that is easy to maintain.
- Improved body image and overall relationship with your body.
- Freedom from dieting forever.
- Healthier body and mind.
- Improved satisfaction with the foods you eat.
- Improved emotional intelligence and coping skills.
- Improved confidence in your food choices.

For more information on Intuitive Eating, some additional resources are listed below:

- Blog | Positive Nutrition
- Blog | Alissa Rumsey
- Intuitive eating — The Joy Of Eating Blog by Rachel Hartley, Registered Dietitian & Nutritionist — Registered Dietitian Columbia SC - Rachael Hartley Nutrition
- Blog | The Intuitive Nutritionist

Sources:

1. Tribole E. What is intuitive eating? Intuitive Eating. http://www.intuitiveeating.org/what-is-intuitive-eating-tribole/. Published February 26, 2020. Accessed November 23, 2022.
2. 10 principles of intuitive eating. Intuitive Eating. http://www.intuitiveeating.org/10-principles-of-intuitive-eating/. Published December 19, 2019. Accessed November 23, 2022.