Principles of Intuitive Eating (Part 1)
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According to U.S. News and World Report, about 90 to 95 percent of all diets fail. Although almost any weight-loss plan can yield short-term benefits, over time the pounds inevitably creep back on, and it’s not unusual to end up weighing more than you did before you started dieting.

A healthy approach to eating, called “Intuitive Eating,” believes the blame should be placed on the flawed process of dieting rather than blaming the “dieters”. This week, I’m sharing five ways you can begin to eat intuitively, from Sun Basket’s [staff dietitian, Lindsey Kane](https://sunbasket.com/stories/meet-lindsey-kane). Next week, I’ll share five more. By beginning to implement these strategies, you’ll develop healthy habits and be able to get off the diet-go-round for good.

1. Reject the diet mentality.
Stop chasing diets and allowing the latest fad dictate what, how much, and when to eat. This rigid lifestyle of restriction and deprivation can lead to a toxic relationship with food. Instead, [make a commitment](https://sunbasket.com/stories/healthy-holidays-habits) to trust your gut when it comes to food choices.

2. Honor your hunger.
While most diets require you to resist a growling stomach, intuitive eating is about rebuilding faith in your body’s cues. You’ll learn to be more aware of your hunger and how to respond appropriately to it *before* you become ravenous.  Before each meal, rate your level of hunger, jot down a few internal cues that you observed, and the time of day. Do this for a week and you’ll become more in tune with your appetite, as well as which foods deliver long-lasting energy, and those that deliver short-lived satiety.

3. Make peace with food.
Abandon the idea of “good” and “bad” foods. Viewing foods that way fuels an 'all or nothing' mentality that can lead to [cravings](https://sunbasket.com/stories/the-science-of-food-cravings) for 'forbidden' foods, followed by binging and a rush of self-loathing and shame. Intuitive eating promotes the idea that food should always be a life-enhancing experience.

4. Challenge the food police.
Reframe your attitude toward food. Take note of any “food police” thoughts you may have, such as “I was bad today” or “I shouldn’t eat that.” Resist the notion that your food choices define you and the value you bring to this world. Look out for people who may be consciously or unconsciously manifesting a food-police mentality, share your intuitive eating philosophy with them and ask them to support you by keeping their negative comments to themselves.

5. Respect your fullness.
The flip side of honoring your hunger is to respect when you’re full. Because diets limit what, when, and how much you eat, it’s easy to become disconnected from the internal signs that signal satiety. When you practice intuitive eating, you start a meal with a lower level of hunger and in a frame of mind that allows you to be more sensitive to satiety cues. Plus, you know you can refuel whenever you’re hungry again, and you won’t feel pressured to clean your plate. Use a satiety scale during meals to train your mind to get in touch with cues of satiety. Jot down observations of how you feel and what you ate. This will help determine when to put your fork down and walk away from a meal feeling comfortably nourished and energized.

By implementing these strategies, you can create healthy habits around food that will positively impact your health for years to come. Stay tuned next week for five more tips on how to incorporate intuitive eating into your daily life.

*Pathways to Healing specializes in holistic chiropractic care. Dr. Alyssa Musgrove draws on a variety of techniques, including chiropractic, kinesiology, nutrition, food allergy testing and lifestyle counseling to assist clients in achieving optimal health and wellness in one setting. Pathways to Healing is located at 1022 Founders Row, Lake Oconee Village, Greensboro. The office can be reached at 706-454-2040.*