

TEN PRINCIPLES OF INTUITIVE EATING

HOLIDAY EDITION

#1

Reject the diet mentality

You will be bombarded with diets and diet messages this time of year, especially as the new year approaches. Try to ignore them and their empty promises. You don't need to start another short-term restrictive diet that will inevitably end and leave you feeling worse off than you did before. You are starting a new long-term journey rediscovering your body through intuitive eating.

#3

Make peace with food

Stop fighting food! It is a normal physiological desire to want food. The more you tell yourself you "can't" or "shouldn't" eat that sugar cookie, the more you want it and think about it, which will likely result in overeating of cookies, or eating everything else but the cookie, followed by a feeling of guilt and shame. If you're honoring your hunger and want a cookie, eat the cookie and move on. Don't allow it to have power over you.

#5

Respect your fullness

Just like it is important to listen to your body's innate desire to eat through hunger cues, you should also listen when your body tells you it is satisfied. Start to recognize the physical signs of fullness. Eat slowly and with intention, and check in with yourself during a meal to see where you're at.

#7

Honor your feelings without using food

Stress and emotions can run high around the holidays (or all year for that matter). If you notice that you tend to turn to food during times of stress or anxiety or loneliness or boredom, it's time to find a better way to deal with those feelings. Remember, it is OKAY to feel. Just know that food isn't going to fix the issue. Try journaling, listening to music, calling a friend, or taking a bubble bath as a way to honor what ever it is you are feeling.

#9

Exercise - Feel the difference

If you look at exercise simply as a method to losing weight, chances are you (a) won't really enjoy it, and (b) won't really stick with it. However, when you start doing activities that you enjoy and viewing them in terms of how they make you feel - energized, strong, confident - you're much more likely to want to do them and that is way more motivating. Take a family walk after a holiday meal and enjoy the scenery and more time with loved ones.

Honor your hunger

Trust your body's natural signal that it needs food for fuel, and honor it with a meal or snack. The holidays are busy and you may find yourself running from place to place like a mad person. Pack snacks in your purse or car so you don't get to a point of excessive hunger, when inevitably it will be more difficult to moderate intake and be intentional with food choices.

#2

Challenge the food police

Food is not "good" or "bad"; food is food. You are not "good" for restricting your food intake all day, just as you are not "bad" for drinking your favorite hot cocoa. When these food police thoughts pop into your head, just say NO! Start reframing your thinking of food and kick those diet rules to the curb.

#4

Discover the satisfaction factor

Food is meant to be satisfying and the eating experience is meant to be pleasurable. Our desire for thinness and weight loss may cause us to overlook this important part of life and one of the greatest pleasures we have as humans. This holiday season look at family gatherings and meals as a special time to enjoy delicious food and the company of loved ones, without obsessing over the food as a kind of "evil". ENJOY IT!

#6

Respect your body

It is going to be very difficult to ultimately reject the diet mentality if you can't learn to love and respect your body. You only have one body, and it was wonderfully created just for you by your parents. Genetics play a big role in your body shape. Practice reframing your thoughts around your body to positive ones - "my body is strong and it allows me to walk and move around and do the things that I love."

#8

Honor your health

Using gentle nutrition, make food choices that honor your body and health, as well as your tastebuds. You don't have to eat perfectly (that's not even a real thing) to be in good health. Try roasting veggies as a side dish to get some fiber, vitamins + minerals and 'cause they taste good. Serve it alongside your other favorites - it doesn't have to be all or nothing!

#10