Tap into your

Intuitive Eating

and ditch the Food Rules

"This dressing has too much fat"

"Need to burn calories after this meal"

"Will skip dinner to make up for eating this"

"Need to stop eating before 6 pm"

"There're too many calories in this dish"

"I can't allow myself a desert after this"

This is what Food Rules might look like

WELLNESS
UF & UF Health Gainesville

Are you an Intuitive Eater?

Take this quiz to get a sense of whether or not you're an intuitive eater. Whatever your score, it is not cause for concern or worry. This is simply an assessment to see where you are now.

Keep count and give yourself one point for each statement you agree with and sum at the end.

1) Unconditional permission to eat

- I try to avoid certain foods high in fat, carbs, sugar, or kcals
- I have forbidden foods that I don't let myself eat
- I get mad at myself for eating something unhealthy
- If I crave a certain food, I don't allow myself to have it
- I follow rules that dictate what/when/how much to eat

2) Eating for physical rather than emotional reasons

I eat when I'm feeling:

- Emotional (anxious, depressed, sad...)
- Lonely
- Bored
- Stressed out...even if I'm not physically hungry
- I use food to help me soothe negative emotions

3) Reliance on hunger and satiety cues

- I don't trust my body to tell me when to eat
- I don't trust my body to tell me what to eat
- I don't trust my body to tell me how much to eat
- I don't trust my body to tell me when to stop eating
- I can't tell when I'm slightly hungry
- I can't tell when I'm slightly full

4) Body-food choice congruence

- Most of the time, I don't want to eat nutritious foods
- I don't often eat foods that make my body perform well
- I don't often eat foods that give my body energy and stamina

Your Score:

15-19: You likely don't trust your body to tell you what, when and how much to eat. But you are not alone, and there are a lot of things you can do and skills you can work on to develop a healthier relationship with food. It is 100% possible to unlearn the diet mentality and tap into your intuition.

10-14: Food rules more than likely dictate a portion of your eating behavior. You likely sometimes feel stressed out about what, when, and how much to eat. You may be reliant on apps, calorie trackers, and meal or diet plans to guide your eating. By working on becoming an intuitive eater you can shift into YOU being the expert of YOU and decide yourself what, when, and how much to eat.

5-9: You eat intuitively most of the time, but there still may be some areas that you want to work on to help you become more in tune with your body.

0-4: Congrats! Your relationship with food is pretty darn good. You may have a few minor areas to work on, but overall your are doing great.

Intuitive Eating Principles

1. Reject the Diet Mentality

Throw out the diet books and magazine articles that offer you the false hope of losing weight quickly, easily, and permanently

2. Honor your Hunger

Keep your body biologically fed with adequate energy and carbohydrates. Otherwise you might trigger a primal drive to overeat.

3. Make Peace with Food

Give yourself unconditional permission to eat. If you restrict a particular food, it can lead to intense feelings of deprivation and cravings.

Intuitive Eating Principles

4. Challenge the Food Police

Ignore the thoughts in your head that declare you're "good" for eating minimal calories or "bad" because you ate a piece of cake. It's all diet culture tricks.

5. Discover the Satisfaction Factor

Diet culture often neglects the importance of pleasure in the eating experience. When you eat what you really want, you will feel satisfied and content.

6. Feel Your Fullness

Listen for the body signals that tell you that you are no longer hungry. Observe the signs that show that you're comfortably full.

Intuitive Eating Principles

7. Cope with Emotions with Kindness

Often, we turn to food for comfort and distraction from anxiety, loneliness, boredom, etc. But food only masks the problem. Finding kind ways to unwind without food can help avoid emotional eating.

8. Respect Your Body

Just as a person with shoe size 8 can't squeeze into size 6, it is equally unrealistic to expect that for body size. Respecting your body is the first step to feeling better about yourself.

9. Movement—Feel the Difference

Focus on how it feels to move your body, rather than the calorie-burning effect of exercise. Movement doesn't have to be a burden, it can be fun and enjoyable.

Intuitive Eating Principles

10. Honor Your Health–Gentle Nutrition

Make food choices that honor your health and taste buds while making you feel good. Remember that 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.

Reflection Activity

List a few "Food Rules" you have. Reflect on where you got them from and challenge those beliefs. Try to re-frame your thoughts by turning them into positive affirmations.

Ex: No snacking between meals (food rule)--> My body knows best when it needs energy & nutrients (re-framed thought)