



FREE YOURSELF FROM FOOD STRESS

5 Steps to Start Your Intuitive Eating Journey

with Deb Watsham
Certified Practicing Nutritionist + Intuitive Eating Therapist



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*It's time to
stop stressing
over food!*

FOOD SHOULD BE A SOURCE OF JOY, NOT STRESS.

Do you sometimes feel guilt, shame, or confusion about what you eat? Does it ever seem like an all-or-nothing struggle, where no matter how hard you try, you just can't get it right?

You're not alone, and you're in the right place.



Intuitive Eating is about getting back to the natural way of eating. Just as our bodies signal when we need to use the bathroom, they also tell us when we need food and nourishment.

When we truly listen to our bodies, we can eat without diets or strict food rules.

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LET GO OF THE FOOD RULES THAT TELL YOU NOT TO TRUST YOUR BODY.

In our culture, it's common to be taught not to trust our own bodies, but rather to follow rigid food guidelines.

Over time, this can cause us to lose trust in our body's signals and make it hard to understand what we truly need.

If you're thinking, "There's no way I could ever let my body tell me what to eat!" intuitive eating is here to help you.

This approach helps you let go of the stress, guilt, and confusion that comes with food rules, and guides you to tune back into your body as your primary guide for nourishment.

You're on a journey to rediscovering a peaceful relationship with food, and I'm here to support you every step of the way.



*It's time to
make peace
with food!*



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Why do I feel so stressed around food?



Eating isn't just about satisfying hunger; it's a vital part of our human experience.

Food connects us socially, carries cultural significance, evokes emotions, and brings back cherished memories.

In our culture, there's a prevalent belief that "healthy eating" is all about nutrients. But when we ignore the joy, social connections, and comfort that food provides, it can lead to feelings of guilt, shame, and stress around eating.

THIS ISN'T HEALTHY.



Our relationship with our bodies is closely tied to our relationship with food.

Unfortunately, our culture often values body size over the diversity and complexity of different body shapes and weights, which goes far beyond just food choices.

This focus can make us distrust our body's signals, leading to a disconnect from our needs and making it harder to nourish ourselves properly—with food and in other aspects of self-care.

Some questions to explore

What beliefs do I hold about food?

What beliefs do I hold about my body?

My behaviours around food feel... (tick the best answer)

☐

Controlling

☐

Supportive

READY TO LEARN THE 5 STEPS TO

Start Your Intuitive Eating Journey?



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STEP 1: *Make friends with your body*

Your body is not against you, even if it sometimes feels like it's sabotaging all your hard work. It's simply communicating what it needs. The biggest mistake people make is second-guessing their body's signals and instead trusting external rules. For example, thinking, "I'm feeling hungry, but that can't be right; I just ate an hour ago!"

Our culture often teaches us that our bodies can't guide us to eat the right amount. But your body should be your **NUMBER ONE** guide in meeting your needs. External knowledge can support you, but it should never come first.

This connection with your body's signals is called **interoceptive awareness** - it's like our sixth sense! Your body communicates its needs through sensations you feel inside.

WHEN WE ARE ATTUNED TO OUR BODY, WE CAN UNDERSTAND AND PROVIDE THE CARE IT NEEDS.

Fighting against these signals creates a disconnect between your body and mind.




This battle with your body causes stress and increases your body's drives, like hunger, as it fears its basic needs aren't being met.

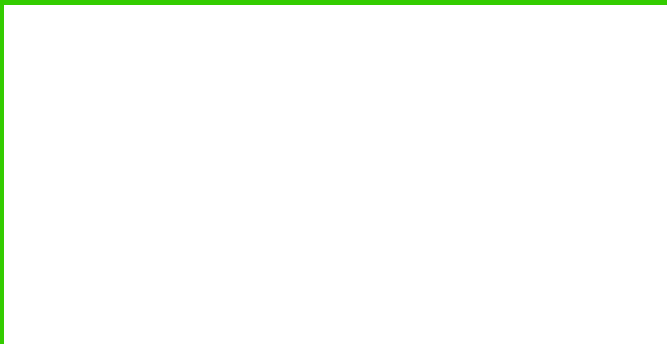
Meanwhile, your mind fights to suppress those basic needs in order to meet society's unrealistic ideals, and despite intense hunger signals, you learn to distrust your body's biological urges.

BY BEFRIENDING YOUR BODY AND LISTENING TO ITS MESSAGES, YOU CAN REDUCE THIS CONFLICT AND START MEETING YOUR NEEDS WITH COMPASSION.

Think of a time you felt you were in a battle with your body. What did it feel like inside?



What could your body be trying to tell you?



STEP 2:

Eat when you're hungry

Do you often feel like you need to wait as long as possible to eat when you start feeling hungry? Or perhaps you second-guess your hunger cues because it hasn't been long enough since your last meal?

**TRUST THAT YOUR BODY
KNOWS WHEN IT NEEDS
NOURISHMENT AND
HONOUR YOUR HUNGER!**

Your body communicates its need for food through various sensations, which can vary depending on your level of hunger.

Waiting too long to eat often leads to extreme hunger, which naturally makes us crave high-energy foods.

Common hunger cues include:

- Thinking about food
- Cravings
- Fatigue or tiredness
- Weakness or shakiness
- Irritability or mood changes
- A rumbling stomach
- A feeling of emptiness
- Reduced focus or brain fog





If you're used to ignoring the early signs of hunger, you might only notice hunger when it becomes extreme. This can manifest as obsessive food thoughts, urgency around eating, cravings for energy-dense foods, and irritability.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY - IT KNOWS WHAT IT NEEDS!

My first signs of hunger are..

My extreme hunger signs are..

When hunger reaches this stage, it can make you feel out of control around food. By eating when you first notice you're hungry, you can maintain better energy levels and a more balanced relationship with food.

STEP 3: *Reconnect with the eating experience*

So often, our eating is guided by external rules: "eat this portion size," "never eat that food," "finish everything on your plate."

We live in a world that encourages us to tune out of the eating experience to meet the ideals of how to eat.

**What guides your food choices?
(check all that apply)**

☐

what I feel like eating

☐

what I think I should eat

☐

the lowest kj/macro option

☐

what's available at the time

other..

Reconnecting with the eating experience means:

- Choosing foods you enjoy and being attuned to how they make you feel
- Noticing your body's cues, such as hunger and fullness
- Allowing yourself to take pleasure in eating





By reconnecting with your body during the eating experience, you'll find more pleasure and satisfaction in your meals. This helps guide you to eat the right amount for your body.

Tips to reconnect with the eating experience:

- Take a pause before and during eating to tune in with how you are feeling
- Seek satisfaction rather than just fullness
- Give yourself full permission to stop eating or continue eating based on your body's signals

EMBRACE THESE STEPS, AND YOU'LL DISCOVER A MORE JOYFUL AND FULFILLING RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD.

STEP 4: *Feel comfortable with fullness*

In our culture, there is a lot of fear surrounding eating and weight, making the feeling of fullness seem intimidating or even like a moral failure. However, fullness is simply your body's way of communicating its needs, just like hunger.

The sensations of fullness can vary depending on how full you are.

Here are some normal cues for fullness:

- Less interest in food
- Feeling satisfied
- Feeling relaxed
- A sense of heaviness in the stomach
- Stomach distension

At higher levels of fullness, you might experience:

- Discomfort in the stomach
- Stomach pain
- Nausea
- Lethargy

EARLIER STAGES OF FULLNESS CAN FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE.

RECONNECTING WITH THE EATING EXPERIENCE CAN HELP YOU IDENTIFY THESE FEELINGS AND YOU'LL LEARN TO RECOGNISE WHEN YOU'RE COMFORTABLY FULL.



Remember, it is not a moral failure to feel very full sometimes; it's completely normal. Society often sends the message that fullness is "bad" and hunger is "good," but in reality, both are just signals from your body to help you meet its needs.

Many people I see tend to eat until they are "not hungry" rather than until they feel full, out of fear of eating "too much." This can leave them feeling hungry again soon after eating and more confused about their relationship with food.

By learning to embrace and understand fullness, we can better tune into our body's natural signals and create a more balanced and satisfying eating experience.

My signs of early fullness are:

My signs of extreme fullness are:

Tips for success

Think of the sensations of fullness as normal messages from your body. Pay attention to how they feel and notice how long they take to subside.

This can help you become more comfortable with the experience.

STEP 5:

Embrace all foods!

We often hear that some foods are "good" and others are "bad," or "healthy" versus "unhealthy." While these labels may come from good intentions, they can make certain foods seem more appealing simply because they're off-limits—we naturally want what we think we can't have.

Every type of food serves a purpose, and when we stop categorising them as good or bad, we open up space to truly understand how different foods make us feel and what our bodies truly crave. Embracing all foods means welcoming everything from vegetables to chocolate, fruits to chips, green tea to sodas, and everything in between.

**ALL KINDS OF FOODS ARE IMPORTANT FOR OUR
WELL-BEING.**

You might worry that allowing all foods will lead to eating only pizza and cookies, but in reality, you'll likely find yourself craving a balanced mix of foods. By giving yourself permission to enjoy all foods, you'll discover what nourishes you in a way that feels good and satisfying - nourishing both your body + your mind.





Congratulations

on taking your first 5 steps towards Intuitive Eating!

You've started on an amazing journey by exploring these five initial steps toward intuitive eating. What have you learned? Have you noticed any small changes in your relationship with food?

While these steps aren't a magic fix for all your food and body struggles, they are a meaningful start on your journey. With continued support and exploration, you can develop a more intuitive and compassionate approach to eating.

Want to learn more?



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Do you want some help to
*kick dieting to the
kerb for good?*

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NOW!



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Hi there!

I'm Deb Watsham, a Certified Practicing Nutritionist, Paediatric Nutritionist and Intuitive Eating Therapist.

I'm passionate about helping people to heal their relationships with food and their bodies because we all deserve to eat in a way that brings us true well-being and nourishes our body + mind.



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