INTUITIVE EATING: HOW IT CAN HELP YOU REACH YOUR NUTRITIONAL GOALS?

As a reminder, eat more fruits, vegetables, legumes, cereals, fish and monounsaturated fats such as olive oil on a Mediterranean diet, and less red meat, dairy products, and saturated fats compared to the typical American diet. Moderate alcohol consumption, especially red wine with meals can also be part of a Mediterranean way of eating.

1. Why do you eat?

2. How do you know when to eat?

Describe being “hungry”: 

Do you feel “hunger”? ( Not everyone does)

3. How do you know when to stop eating?

Describe being “full”:

Describe being “overfull”:

What can you do about being overfull or stuffed?

4. Do you feel that you need to eat everything on your plate? Why? Is that a lifelong habit? What could you do to always keep from eating everything on your plate?

5. What happens when you go to a restaurant? Do you feel that you need to eat everything you are served? How can you eat less knowing that most restaurant portions are huge?

6. Are you eating the same amount of food that you ate when you were younger?
7. What happens when you eat too quickly? Is there a benefit in eating more slowly? How might you try to eat more slowly?

8. Does eating three meals a day help to keep you from overeating?

   Can you save calories by skipping a meal such as breakfast? What happens to your eating the rest of the day when you skip breakfast?

9. Do you go longer than three to five hours between eating? What happens when you go too long without eating? Is that a pleasurable experience?

10. Would it be helpful for you to eat a mid-morning and/or a mid-afternoon snack to keep from overeating at the next meal?

11. What are some healthful and satisfying snacks that fit into the Mediterranean way of eating?

12. Do you eat a snack after dinner? What is that snack? Do you really need to eat a snack after dinner or is it just a habit?

   If you like a sweet after dinner, would you do better to eat a small portion of that sweet just following your meal when you are not really hungry?

   Can eating a small portion of a treat be satisfying to you? How can you make it satisfying?

13. How can you make dinner time a very pleasant experience for you?

   Think about the food itself:

   Think about the environment.

   What happens when you watch television and eat at the same time? Is it more difficult to appreciate the meal that you are eating?
13. Can and do you learn about your eating by making mistakes in your eating?

The goal is to eat intuitively most of the time. Eating intuitively is eating when one is hungry and stopping to eat when one is just full and not stuffed. It is important to eat food that is satisfying. Use your senses to appreciate every aspect of what you are eating.

Eating intuitively is eating according to the needs of your body. If you really pay attention to hunger and fullness and eat intuitively, you do not need to count calories.

The problem with counting calories is that it makes you feel “deprived”. When you deprive yourself of a specific food, you only want that food more.

We eat intuitively only 20% of the time, and eat for other reasons 80% of the time. Using a “hunger fullness chart” can help you tune into intuitive eating. And you will find that when you eat, and you are truly hungry, the food will taste so much better.

Eating intuitively means that you are truly listening to your body, and eating according to your body’s signals. It is a very empowering way of eating, and once you are used to eating this way, you can more easily pass up food that is offered to you that you do not need.

Eating intuitively helps to make up for errors in regulation. This means that when you overeat, you will eat less at the next meal or not get as hungry as soon. The opposite is true too. If you undereat, you will eat more at the next meal or get hungrier sooner.

Please email me at Karenprrd@aol.com if you would like to start using a “hunger fullness chart” to begin to practice intuitive eating. Practice makes perfect……..and using this chart to tract your hunger and fullness will take time and practice to help you make this very healthful change.

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